

KOREAN E X P E R I E N C E

Yatindra Bhatnagar

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From The Publisher

IT IS with a great sense of pride and fulfilment that we present to Indian readers a comprehensive book on Korea, The Republic Of Korea. A book like this was, we think, overdue in this country which could tell the readers of the various facets of the Land Of The Morning Calm, its challenges and its achievements. We are happy that we have been able to fill that void.

Deepsadhana Publications have been striving to give the readers something new, something interesting and something informative. One of the first in this effort was *Australiana : A Visit To Remember* which was welcomed by readers enthusiastically. We hope *KOREAN EXPERIENCE* will also be received well by enlightened readers.

We must record our appreciation of the timely help and assistance from Shri V.P. Dhawan of R.K. Printers, who not only relieved us of all the problems of printing but also gave valuable suggestions for the making of a first class book. Needless to say that without the whole-hearted cooperation of Shri V. P. Dhawan this book could not have come out in such a record time. Our grateful thanks to them and to the entire staff of R.K. Printers.

—Sadhana Bhatnagar

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Introduction

INSPIRE of the Korean War of 1950-53 and a book on the Far East that I had translated, I must confess, I did not know enough about Korea in 1965. There had been most infrequent contacts and not much was written about Korea in India. 1965 was a turning point in Bhatnagar-Korean relations. As things turned out I had occasions to not only come in close contact with Koreans in India but also abroad. In fact I shared rooms and a project with Koreans thousands of miles away from India—and also from Korea. That was the beginning of my close acquaintance with Korea and Koreans in a proper manner. That was in 1965 and I have not looked back since, as the saying goes.

That was a memorable year in many respects—the year of Grace One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixtyfive. Early in the year, in February, there was an international meet in New Delhi. It was the 20th Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce with an eminent Indian industrialist, Dr Bharat Ram, as the Chairman. I used to remark then that all the Tatas and Birlas (top Indian industrialists) of the world have come to Delhi. It was really a glittering gathering of top people in the world of industry and trade. I was reporting the conference for my newspaper *Hindustan*,

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and came in contact with several delegates, including the Koreans, thanks to the International Chamber of Commerce and the Indian organisers.

It was a lovely evening when we met, I and a beautiful young lady from Korea. Graciously attired in typical Korean costume she was standing in the porch of Hotel Imperial as I came out from the reception hosted by the President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry to the delegates of ICC. I was fascinated by the beauty in front of me. She must have noted my curiosity and she smiled sweetly. Little did I realise that smiles and smiles will greet me in Korea and the owner of that billion Won (South Korean Currency) smile was none other than the lovely wife of one of Korea's leading industrialists, Sull Wonshik.

As she stood waiting in the porch for the car her husband had gone to search among the host of cars I got a chance to talk to her. Soon Mr Sull arrived on the scene and we became friends, instantly. I had met the then Korean Consul General in New Delhi, Mr Ben C Limb on a few occasions without knowing that he was related to a couple I was destined to meet subsequently and who would be among my best oversea friends. As I saw the official car with a diplomatic number I knew that the Sulls were related to Mr Limb. I found out later that Mrs Sull was related to Mr Limb and that in fact her name, traditionally, was Limb Hisook. That short meeting was enough to rouse nice feelings for them and the Koreans in general. We subsequently met three or four times till the conference lasted. The young industrialist from Seoul was a member of the official Korean delegation and she the accompanying spouse. Hisook Sull, a lovely and gracious young lady, is an artist and has been holding art exhibitions all over the world, but that I learnt later. She was too modest to tell me about her accomplish-

ments directly. I came to know of it when she sent an invitation card for her painting exhibition to be held in a Middle Eastern country.

In a few days the International Chamber Conference had ended and all the delegates left New Delhi. Some did leave a part of their hearts behind and one such was Hisook. She sent me a picture post-card from Cairo saying that she did find the Taj Mahal in India (as recommended by me) fascinating and that she had left a part of her heart there. I wrote at her permanent address in Seoul that on a visit to the Taj later I found that precious piece of her heart and I have now preserved it with me. Correspondence continued and one day the charming wife of my friend Sull Wonshik appeared at my doors in the form of a delightful doll. It was a typical Korean doll, exquisitely made and in a most charming standing pose; was sent to me by my friend Hisook from Seoul. I was delighted.

Soon after she wrote to me that if ever you come to Korea you should be my guest. I am in the habit of promising visits and stay, off the cuff, to friends who graciously extend invitations to me, little realising that I may not get a chance to make the oversea journey. Fortunately many such promises have been kept and such has been merciful God in the case of my Korean journey also.

I got an invitation to visit the United States the same year, 1965. On my return journey there was a chance to stop in Seoul also. I wrote to Hisook from USA and promptly got a cable from Mr Sull welcoming me. I decided to really keep my promise and stop in Seoul for three days on my way back to India. Before that there were four Koreans in the United States to arouse my interest further in the far away country and to enable me to know the Koreans and their country a little better.

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My American visit lasted four months from September to January. The project under which I visited the US, Multi-National Foreign Journalists Project of Indiana University, Bloomington, had four Koreans out of a total of 13 journalists from 8 different countries. Soon we became friends, thanks to the nicely arranged project and its dynamic Director Professor Floyd G. Arpan, 'Papa Floyd' to all of us. There was Kim Seung Yul, Kim Sang Jin, Hong Yong Ki and the youngest, Im Sang Jae. Hong was my room-mate for a number of days (and for some time Kim Sang Jin also shared a room with me. They were friendly, lively and jolly lot who left a good impression on me and, coupled with letters from Hisook, I had become fascinated with this small country on the east Asian scene.

It was not that I had not heard about Korea before I saw Hisook. I distinctly remember the day, June 25th, 1950 when the teleprinter in my newspaper office tick-ticked a message 'Flash, Flash Flash, North Korea invades South'. I also remembered that for the first time UN forces were deployed in a theatre of war. My recollection did not fail me that the then Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru had sent an ambulance brigade to help the South Koreans. It was also a glorious chapter of Indian Army's history that the peace-keeping operations and the exchange of prisoners of war were entrusted to Indians who did a commendable job on both the counts. About the Korean War later. I only wanted to recollect my thoughts when I met the Koreans and was proud to know that they also had not forgotten the contribution of India as a peace-maker. There was a period of quiet in Indo-Korean relations since then and there was not much contact between the journalists of the two countries.

My American visit enabled me to come in close contact with the Koreans and to get the situation

rectified—in our own quiet way. My association with the Koreans grew and when the day of parting came after the project was over in the United States we bade farewell to each other in a fond hope that we will meet again very soon. I did meet most of them later in Korea, in India and in Britain. Other Koreans also became my good friends. They gave me a glimpse of the country, its vibrant economy, its history, and its culture. One of my Korean friends even sang for me the famous folk song 'Arirang...'. I am told it is the only point of agreement between North and South Korea.

To leave the United States and travel to Korea via Japan was not so eventful till I left Tokyo and was approaching Seoul. I began to wonder what will happen to me if the Sulls would not be at the airport to receive me. I did not know where to go in Seoul, I had not booked a hotel room there, I did not know how costly Seoul would actually be. I did not want to go directly to the home of any of my other Korean friends of the US trip because none of them was scheduled to be back in Korea before my arrival. One had gone to South America, two to Hawaii and the fourth was spending some time in Japan. My only hope was Sull Wonshik and his lovely wife. They did not fail me as they had themselves invited me. As I came out of the custom's enclosure a pretty hand gently caught hold of me and I was thrilled to find myself in the safe custody of the Sulls, represented by Hisook.

That was my first close contact with the Koreans on the Korean soil. It was destined to grow in years to come. That also helped deepen my interest in Korea and Koreans. Connections and relations grew and several Koreans became good family friends. We have been meeting in India, in Pakistan, in UK, in Egypt, and of course in Korea. A charming society full of zest for life, vibrant and dynamic has emerged in Korea in

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recent years. Though small in size, the Republic of Korea offered hospitality that knew no bounds, beauty that knew no barriers and inspiration for hard work that tolerated no excuses.

My Korean Experience had really begun !

More Of Koreans

MR BEN C. LIMB, the South Korean Consul General in New Delhi was a dignified but quiet diplomat who never made much of a fuss about things. I, among the more active journalists, was able to meet him a couple of times but that was all. Then my acquaintance with the Sulls brought me a little nearer Mr Limb but my real contact with the Koreans were to come later in the year when I undertook the journey to the United States and had a four month long stay there. The four Korean journalists I came in contact with were a diverse lot. The eldest Kim was already an assistant managing editor of the leading Korean newspaper, *Dong-A Ilbo*. The other was from Hankook Ilbo, Kim Sang Jin. My room-mate Hong Yong ki, and the baby of the Korean team, Im Sang Jae were from Joong-Ang Ilbo also written as Choong-Ang Ilbo.

For four months we were together, eating, living, speaking to the group, listening to lectures and participating in parties, writing for newspapers and travelling. The boss of the whole show was 'Papa Floyd'—Prof. Floyd Gordon Arpan, the Director of the Multi-National Foreign Journalists Project at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. There I got more information about Korea, and Koreans. The prospects of a visit to Korea

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were also discussed. Hisook wrote to me from Korea and I told my Korean journalist friends about her and Mr Sull. They were impressed as the Sulls occupied a very prominent position in Korea, its business and social circles. I made my friend Im write to me in Korean a proper form of address to Hisook. When I received a reply from her she did appreciate my effort but wrote that that particularly polite form of address was too formal for her. That showed how informal and friendly my relations with the Sulls were and this fact duly impressed my Korean friends with the project without my unduly trying to impress them with my connections.

While selecting a leader for a week or so when we were travelling without the project director Papa Floyd, it was Im who proposed my name. It was immediately seconded by another friend from Korea, Hong. I was unanimously selected to lead the team of 13 journalists from eight different countries. It could be a job to manage thirteen journalists who usually have thirteen different points of view though the job of the leader did not mean really managing the affairs of an Indian political party. The only thing I had to do was to represent the Director at various meetings and be his spokesman. The other and more difficult was to sort out some little problems that did crop up in that period when we all were together and without the Director.

One of the ticklish problems was rooming. 'Papa Floyd' had very imaginatively arranged it. He had paired us with a view to enable us to know each other better. One of the Koreans, Kim Sang Jin, was the room-mate of another Indian, S. Ramanathan, who, alas is no more. Ramanathan was a very likable fellow otherwise and Kim also did not have any complaint other than that of his snoring. One day, the very first after we were left alone by the Director, Kim came to me and said he

wanted to change his room. I did not like the idea as 'Papa Floyd' had arranged it wonderfully well but when I saw Kim was serious and felt like leaving the entire tour to go back to his country I was alarmed. I never thought snoring could be that obnoxious, I didn't snore then. He complained that his partner snored heavily and that it had become impossible for him to sleep. Reluctantly I had to change the arrangement and instead of inconveniencing some other I volunteered to share the room with Ramanathan. I am sure I did not snore then and in any case my snoring, if any, did not bother Ramanathan in the least. We managed for a couple of days more and I personally felt happy that I solved one of the very serious problems facing the team and made one of my Korean friends happy.

Hong and I were quite friendly. He was, as he told me one day, the best folk song singer in Korea and I have a documentary proof, it was tape-recorded on my newly acquired tape recorder. He sang for me the famous 'Arirang' and seemed to do very well. His laughter and his friendliness left a deep impact on me. Actually he and I decided to meet in Korea on my way back to India. Being still young he must have over-spent time in Hawaii and we could not meet in Seoul. Later, on my second visit to Korea and Seoul we did meet, at his house where his lovely family entertained me with gorgeous dinner and intimate talks. Hong since then changed over to full time broadcasting, and is now with the Voice of America in the United States.

The elder Kim, the assistant managing editor of Dong-A Ilbo, Kim Seung Yul, was equally friendly. He was a sort of guide and friend to all the Koreans in the party, being the seniormost. Many times they were seen huddled together, over a cup of coffee, and at times Kim would invite me also to share a Pizza. He

became a good friend, so good that when years later, in 1972 I and my wife went to Europe and London he took us for a visit to Hyde Park and other places and entertained us. His paper is an independent one, mouth piece of opposition, if you please. That made our friendship little more strong as I also believe that a newspaper's job is not to toe the government line at all times and on all issues. A newspaper should be at least 51% against the government. That is the way governments can be made to work, mend their ways and respect the public opinion. A true journalist would certainly carry on his duties without fear or favour and reflect the people's views. The newspapers are the watchdogs of the society and Kim agreed with me wholeheartedly. We write to each other most infrequently but make it a point to call on each other if happened to be in the same city or the country.

The baby of the Korean team, Im Sang Jae, was more lively, as he was younger, more impatient and bubbling with enthusiasm. We had lively discussions on several topics while on the same project. The issues at stake were the position of English language in India, the stationing of foreign troops in Korea, cold war and of course the holy Indian cow. The Indian cow and the American beef cattle are completely different. The Americans are cow worshippers in a way—they don't kill the milch cow, they have developed another strain for meat, the beef cattle which gives them more meat. But to me cow is a cow and I don't eat it, the animal that gives me milk. That is a tradition with a vast majority of Indians. We, I and Im, had lively discussions on the subject and the result was never bitter. Our arguments and counter arguments always ended with cups of coffee or Whiskey-soda, whiskey for him and soda for me.

These then were the Koreans I met in the States and

still remember. They were the first regular contacts I had with them; their impression on me was welcome, friendly and healthy. No amount of debates, arguments and divergent opinion on a wide variety of subjects could dampen our spirits or damage our relations which remained friendly, cordial and lasting.

The Koreans I met later in India have also left a deep impact on me. Almost all of them were connected with the Consulate-general, later the Korean Embassy. They were supposed to be diplomats—Ambassadors, Counsellors, Press Attaches and Consuls but they basically remained human beings, friendly and affectionate.

One of the most prominent among this lot was Dr Woonsang Choi, the Consul General for over 5 years. During his tenure all but full diplomatic relations were established between India and the Republic of Korea. It was Dr Choi who built up a strong foundation for Indo-Korean trade and friendship and his successor, Ambassador Lho, gave the finishing touches, very vital no doubt, to the final act of full ambassadorial relations and more contacts. Both the ambassadors were of a very high calibre, as have been the previous and later one, and very informal and friendly. I must confess that they were among the best of the whole lot of foreign diplomats I have come across in my journalistic career so far.

Dr Choi carried the personal rank of the Ambassador in India though we did not have full diplomatic relations till then. One of the first Dr Ben C Limb was also of the ambassador's rank. So was Mr Lho during whose term he became, *de jure* and effective ambassador for his country. The present ambassador Mr. Bum Suk Lee became a friend almost right from the day he presented his credentials to our President.

Dr Woonsang Choi had quite a big family and quite a growth. He was not sorry for either but when he

fell ill on a trip to Goa his wife and other doctors—incidentally his wife was also a medical doctor—advised him to cut down his weight. He did act upon the advice and when I saw him after some time he was a thinner man but full of life, vigour and health.

This wonderful diplomat was very fond of entertaining. He was also a connoisseur of drinks. He would serve lavishly the choicest of wines and the parties thrown by Dr Choi would be the talk of the town. How tremendously popular his parties were could be gauged by the fact that I had often seen the highest of the officials, Chief of the Army Staff General (then) Manekshaw, himself a connoisseur of fine drinks, and all the others who mattered in the social, administrative, political and diplomatic life of Delhi. It had become a sort of party with the oldest and finest of wines, the most popular in town not only because of its drinks but also because of the spirit behind it—a genuinely informal get-together of people.

Dr Choi had given Indo-Korean relations the turning point it really deserved, political, economic and cultural. No wonder he was held in high esteem by the people who mattered in government, business and journalistic circles. One of the evidence of his popularity was the fact that he was one of the very few foreign envoys present at the time of the surrender by East Pakistan's Lt Gen Niazi before the Indian Eastern Command Chief, Lt Gen Aurora in Dacca in 1971. Dr Choi was the personal guest of the Command Chief and the Chief of the Army staff, General Manekshaw.

Dr Choi even as Consul General had earned much reputation as a distinguished representative of an up-and coming country, friendly and peace-loving. That was why he was much sought after by organisations in India. He also earned the distinction of being the second honorary member of the Rotary Club of Delhi,

the first and the only honorary member till then was the President of India, Mr V.V. Giri.

At the same Rotary Club meeting Dr Choi also recalled what the great poet of India, Rabindranath Tagore, had said quite a few years ago : 'Korea is the Lamp Of The East. The Lamp Must Be Lit.' Dr Choi appropriately ended his address to the Rotarians with the words : 'I now say to you that the Lamp has been lit. To the bright future of freedom and prosperity, Korea and India will march forward side by side as we have done in the past. In this noble endeavour, the people of Korea are looking forward to the people of India for their continuing support and cooperation.'

These words were more than welcomed by the distinguished gathering of prominent social and business representatives of the capital city of India. Such was the response to the Korean effort to forge the ties between the two countries and such was the response from the Indian side, again inspite of many other things.

To us journalists, Dr Choi was extremely nice and friendly. His doors were always open for us and actually one of the reasons for my taking an active interest in Korea and Korean-Indian friendship was the relations with this eminent envoy.

Many years ago, in 1972, when I and my wife went to Cairo and Europe on holiday, Dr Choi met and entertained us in the Egyptian capital also where he was stationed as the ambassador then. He and his gracious wife were a picture of affection and kindness. Their children, so lovely and jovial, gave us immense joy when we were so far away from our two daughters, left behind in India. That was real human relation which characterised Dr Choi. He left a trail for the others to follow.

I would not compare any two persons. Every

one in the Korean embassy, visiting Korean business-men and professional journalists gave me food for thought, gave me something to ponder and crave for closer relationship with this ancient country whose written history dating back to 4,000 years is a proud saga of highest tradition in religion, fine arts and nationalism. That was why we rejoiced in Delhi when Ambassador Lho and his charming wife came to India and continued the tradition. It was during the early part of the tenure of Ambassador Lho that I visited Korea a second time—first time as government guest—and saw almost the entire country. Ambassador Lho was responsible for furthering the relations between the two countries the solid foundations of which were laid in the immediate past.

There were other Koreans also ; Lew, Kang, Kim and young Cho who stayed for a very short time but has now come back as Press Officer. He had not forgotten me. He is a young man with a very efficient manner of working. Everytime I require some information, even from Seoul, he is quicker and surer than my expectation.

They say that if you throw four stones in a busy street in Korea three are sure to hit Kims. There are no doubt so many Kims but there is a Kim who became dear to me while in India. Kim Do Yon looked after press affairs during Dr Choi's term in India. This Kim was so informal, friendly and carefree that while in Pakistan in 1973 as press officer to the embassy there he did not hesitate to invite me and the other visiting Indian journalist V.P. Ramachandran—both 'brothers' to Kim—at his place for an informal dinner. He was unmindful of what the Pakistanis would think about his Indian connections ; our relations with Pakistan were then far from normal and the delegation with which we had gone to Pakistan was negotiating to make the

relations normal.

Kim's house in Shanti Niketan, New Delhi, was the meeting place of journalists—first Monday of every month—and his wife and children would entertain us with choicest Korean dishes. It was not because of drinks—which of course flowed—but the friendly informality that enabled us to exchange views with the Korean diplomats, visiting journalists and scholars. No doubt some others enjoyed it more because of drinks but to me who gets drunk only on soft drinks those meetings were even otherwise lively, frank, enjoyable and worthwhile because of their intellectual atmosphere and food for thought. The discussions were open to all points of view, all shades of opinion and were free for all, no holds barred, and were enjoyed by all. Memories of those meetings were revived when I met the Kim family in Korea in 1972, at a dinner in my honour.

Kim's successor was Lew Chi Ho, who had just joined diplomatic service leaving his journalistic career. His experience as journalist came handy to him and he laid more stress on giving information about Korea and Koreans through *Korean News*, a lovely pictorial journal that he started. It also satisfied the journalistic urge of Lew who took pains to make the journal readable. It gave us an opportunity to write about our Korean experience and Indo-Korean relations. I also had contributed a couple of articles for the *Korean News*.

This two-way traffic and relations continued to grow in later years.

Ambassador Lee's introduction to me was an interesting affair. It was three days after he presented his credentials to the President of India. July 20th, 1976 was the day Mr Lee went to Rashtrapati Bhavan for the presentation ceremony

and three days later, on July 23, we met at the Egyptian Ambassador's party on their National Day. Said the Ambassador to me : 'I am new to this country, I have presented my credentials only three days back'. I shot back in my humorous way : Excellency, you have been recognised by the President of India but not by the Press ; It will only be done when you present your credentials to us. The Ambassador got the hint and assured me that he will arrange a meeting with Delhi Press very shortly. Ambassador Lee's first press conference was held after five days, on July 28, and he graciously referred to the fact that I had advised him to 'present his credentials' to Pressmen before he would be given 'due recognition.' It was a gracious gesture indeed and earned the goodwill of newspapermen. Though the Ambassador is not very fond of holding press conferences he is nevertheless very hospitable, likeable and a person of excellent taste.

The Ambassador's basic mission, as he himself set out in his statement at the press conference, which I have still preserved, was to strengthen the already existing close ties between the two countries in all fields. 'I will try to bring better and correct understanding of the delicate Korean situation to the Indian government and community', he had stated, 'and also convey the basic philosophy and policies of the people and government of India to my government and people.' The Ambassador also stressed the need to further develop trade and economic relations as well as cultural ties which bind the two countries for sixteen centuries in one way or the other.

H. E. Bum Suk Lee also made the position clear about the unification of two Koreas, a subject I will deal with later.

Ambassador Lee was in an advantageous position

to speak about the unification problem also as he had been the country's Chief Delegate at the Red Cross conference with the North Koreans.

Mr Lee looked quite young notwithstanding his 53 years and I remarked about his youngish appearance. He wanted to impress me with his age and shot back: 'I am 53'. Little did he realise that in India we take people over seventy and eighty years as real elderly and all the others are youngsters. There is a proverb in Hindi language '*Satha So Patha*' (you are real sturdy young man when you are sixty—younger ones are just children). I told the Ambassador about our conception of old and young and he enjoyed it.

The other Korean whom I had informal relations with was Park Sang Jin, the immediate past press officer of the embassy here. Some sort of a mysterious smile always hovered on his face and his eyes always sparkled at my sight, so I thought. I don't know if it was really so and I don't know the reason, if any. He had taken keen interest in my book and one day—rather one night—he rang me up at 11 at night. I thought he must be in the midst of a drinking party and suddenly remembered me. No, his secretary assured me the next day. Mr Park was working in his office till midnight last night, she told me. That was surprising. I told Park that he did not have to work that hard to promote Indo-Korean relations; they were as good as they can be, inspite of everything. He is now in Osaka, Japan, nearer home and left me to work overtime to re-construct the missing chapters.

There are other Koreans also whom I met in India and have no intention of forgetting them. Incidentally Dr Ben C Limb came back to India with the world famous 'Little Angels' troupe and we met refreshing old acquaintance. The performance of the 'Angels' was as usual superb. I have written about them elsewhere.

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Korea and Koreans have become my favourites. I have seen quite a big part of the country from Panmunjom-Inchon to Pusan, the only area that remained with the South Koreans at one stage of the Korean War. The Koreans I met in Delhi were from the same affectionate, likeable and informal lot as I met in Korea. Besides officials, journalists, ministers and diplomats I have met several politicians and businessmen also and I have found them very nice, jolly, friendly and of course, dedicated to their country.

A Visit To Remember

MY FIRST visit to this Land Of The Morning Calm, as it is often referred to, was way back in 1966. The month then was January when I landed at the airport and was received by my charming friend Mrs Hisook Sull. I was put in a big car and taken to a very central and comfortable Bando Hotel. Hisook had invited me to Korea and I was supposed to be her guest but when I landed at the airport she asked me if I had any booking at a hotel. I had not booked any room anywhere as I was expecting to be the guest of the Sulls. As soon as she knew that I had not booked a room she sent one of her assistants to do the job. I was soon lodged at the comfortable Bando Hotel and Mrs Sull left to call a little later, after I have rested and changed.

Once inside the big room, I did not have to brood over the situation. An officer of the Sull establishment came to me, the same who had booked the room, and in a very polite manner told me not to pay anything at the hotel, just keep on signing. He said: 'President (of the Company) Sull is taking care of everything.' I felt relieved as that was an expensive hotel. I would have chosen a comparatively cheaper one if I was supposed to pay all that from my pocket. I had enough to pay Bando but I had a long way to go before reaching

home and so was conserving my precious foreign exchange. In those days the Government of India was not that liberal in granting foreign exchange allowance for travel. In any case I was away from home for about five months and had to be careful.

During the three days I was in Seoul all I had to spend was a few dollars for photographs that I got developed and enlarged, and on just a couple of souvenir items. That also happened without the Sulls knowing about it. They were indeed taking care of everything and in such a thorough manner that I really did not have to bother about anything at all. I had come across a tourist slogan in Korea saying : 'You just enjoy your holidays, leave the rest to us'. I literally followed the instructions and enjoyed my holidays leaving everything to my gracious hosts, the Sulls.

The three lovely days I spent in Korea were really the fastest days I have ever spent anywhere. I don't know if there could be any other speed record of spending holiday time. I am sure, since my further programme, especially in Vietnam, was going to be real tough, those days of complete rest and relaxation were very much needed. The hospitality of the Korean people in general and the Sulls in particular left a deep impression on my mind, the like of which one experiences only rarely.

Three days in Seoul were not enough for me nor for my hosts. Mrs Sull in particular, asked me if I could spend a few days more so that they could take me to their country villa outside Seoul. Their children also were not in Seoul and I could not meet them while in the city. Anxious as I was to see some of the places outside Seoul I was also aware of the fact that my programme after Seoul was already chalked out. Moreover it was nearly five months since I left my wife and two little daughters in India. I had to

reluctantly decline the kind offer of Mrs Sull. She made up for that in Seoul itself, I am sure.

Both Mr and Mrs Sull, as well as their staff who was deputed for my comforts, were all kindness to me. The Sulls are very busy and involved people, one in his business and industry, the other in her paintings, family and social life. I must express my gratitude to both of them who spared nothing to make my stay particularly pleasant and fruitful in Seoul. Only once in my half a dozen outings, out of Bando Hotel, I did not have the sweet company of either Hisook or Wonshik. He used to leave his business and Industry and take me to expensive restaurants and she would take me for sight-seeing and shopping. Both would take me to yet another new and lovely place; it was a little outside of Seoul, the famous Walker Hill Tourist Resort, a fabulous place for high spending clients. In the company of the Sulls I was such a one. The only occasion when neither Mr nor Mrs Sull was with me on my sightseeing trips was when I was taken to see the old palaces and places of historical interest. Hisook excused herself by saying that she did not know much about the details of the place and that an experienced guide was placed at my disposal. That enabled me to make acquaintance with an ordinary member of the Korean society, not a millionaire like the Sulls and not a highly placed publisher like Mr Kim Bong-gi, about whom I will tell you later.

Seon-ja was the guide who accompanied me to the sight-seeing trip to the famous Kyongbok Palace built in 1395. The young lady was all attention and courtesy to me, the guest of a famous family of Korea. She explained to me the history of the place, built by Kim Taejo, the founder of the Yi dynasty. It once housed the Kings, queens and their courtiers, as the tourist pamphlet declared and my guide corroborated. The

palace is well preserved to this day and presents a picturesque sight, with the hills as the backdrop.

It was winter in Seoul then. The city temperature was some degrees below zero but the warm hospitality of the hosts made me comfortable. Seon-ja took me to another part of the city next to the palace and we walked over the frozen waters of a lake. I had my overcoat on but there was no fur cap or special boots. The result was I almost froze at both the ends. When Seon-ja asked me a question I could hardly answer her. But that was also enjoyable. My frozen condition was all over once we were out on solid ground away from the frozen water. It was real experience and I enjoyed it and the company.

Seon-ja could not tell me the meaning of her name and so I gave her a similar sounding name with a meaning—Sandhya, meaning evening. She liked it immensely and when she came to bid me farewell the next day she brought a small doll—a couple—with her new name 'Sandhya' written at the back of it. That was the tiniest and loveliest doll, an affectionate present from an ordinary Korean. I got letters from her when in India though my last one to her is still not replied to. I don't know if she is married, has several children and has moved to other part of the country. Wherever she is, she has my good wishes.

That same evening Hisook did not turn up. Instead came Mr Sull Wonshik and his two friends/assistants. I asked Wonshik where his wife was and he smilingly told me that we were going to a place which was 'for men only'. I was curious to know what it was and then it dawned on me that the Koreans also have places of traditional hospitality, the Kisaeng House—cousin of their Japanese counterpart, the Geisha House.

This particular Kisaeng House was of a very high

order, exclusive and of course expensive. The name was something like the Blue Cloud Restaurant. The hours that I spent in the company of Sull Wonshik, his friends and the lovelies from Korea is still fresh on my mind. Wonshik was thoughtful enough to arrange for a photographer also and when I returned to my country he sent the photos to the delight and amusement of my wife. I had told my wife that some naughty pictures were taken at the Kisaeng House and that she should not see them. With this background when she saw the photographs she was not taken aback — she was expecting worse, more naughty than they really were. The photographs showed this Indian journalist singing, with a mike in his hand, with a lovely girl intently watching, with other lovelies sitting on either side and eating in Korean style, squatting on the floor. There could not have been worse than these as the respectable Korean Kisaeng House offer nothing but pure entertainment, lovely Korean music and dance and exquisite Korean food — eaten with charming, sophisticated girls who are adept in the art of conversation. In any case, I did not know of any other aspect of this entertainment business and I do not want to know, if there is any.

The third day of this fairyland holiday — which really inspired me to write this book way back in 1966 entitled 'Korean Holiday' — was taken up by shopping in the morning and visit to the most fabulous tourist resort, Walker Hill, in the evening. In the morning Hisook was with me and in the evening both the Sulls gave me company.

Hisook had come to me in my hotel and asked me if I wanted to buy something. I said, yes only a few souvenirs. She took me to all the best places in the city and when I returned there were not less than half a dozen bundles for my family, all with compliments from

Hisook and Wonshik. There was a jewellery box, fabulously inlaid with shell, a speciality of this part of the world. Then there was a piece of cloth embroidered in traditional Korean motif and so beautiful that my wife has preserved it for one of our daughter's dowry. There were a couple of purses and dolls—and some more to come. I could not but thank Mrs Sull for her kindness and consideration.

Before I prepared for the evening I went to the small photo shop where the previous evening I had given three rolls of films to be developed and prints prepared. I had not expected any shop to do that job in less than three days but when the youngman at the counter told me that it will be ready the next day I was pleasantly surprised. More pleasant surprise was in store for me the next day when I went to him to take delivery of the prints.

He had not only prepared all the prints numbering over one hundred but had also, on his own, enlarged two of the most memorable photos of my American tour. The quality of the work was so good that I unhesitatingly complimented the young man and paid him all that he wanted with a smile and a 'Thank You.' This is the efficiency one expects everywhere and is happy to get it—you don't get it always and everywhere.

Evening came and also came both my friends, the Sulls, to take me to Walker Hill. It is a fabulous place. So often it had been branded a place for entertainment for the Americans but in Korea, as elsewhere, when you build tourist places how many of these are patronised by home tourists ? Obviously these places are meant for the foreign tourist, for the affluent classes of tourists but at the Walker Hill you see many Koreans also. After all, the affluent class in Korea is also growing, like my friend Sull Wonshik who has built

an impressive empire in the period between 1966 and 1972, when I met him again on my second visit.

At the Walker Hill there was good food, good entertainment — dances both Korean and Euro-Americans. Wonshik told me to go on the floor for a dance with his wife which I gratefully declined only because I do not know dancing. The Sulls too did not go to the floor leaving me. I did take some photographs of the dancers and there were a couple of our photographs taken by a professional photographer—a nice one with my good friends the Sulls. It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening in the best of company.

There was also another place worth seeing and paying a visit to. That is The Korea House. It is in Seoul and presents live and entertaining programmes of Korean folk dancing and music. They proudly proclaim that everything was free except traditional Korean food. The architecture of the place is unique in that it does not have any nails, bolts or other metal fastners. The folk dances are superb and music scintillating. There was another session of photography with the hostess of Korea House and my own hosts, the Sulls. It was another of memorable experiences that filled my three days in Seoul.

The only other programme I cannot afford to ignore was also arranged by my dear hosts, the Sulls. Hisook herself took me to the Publisher of *The Korea Herald*, Mr Kim Bong-gi. We had a very useful exchange of views on the state of the Press in India and Korea, international affairs and family life in India. Mr Kim got one of his reporters to interview me and the next day a lengthy write-up appeared in the *Korea Herald*, based on that interview.

To cap it Mr Kim gave me a souvenir—a nice tray with the name *Korea Herald* in metal. It is a fine piece of wood art of the country and I have proudly displayed it in my sitting room.

Three full days and nights of entertainment, sightseeing and relaxation were indeed memorable. In 1966 there was no Indian mission in Seoul and that surprised me as there was a Korean Consulate-General in New Delhi since 1962. In vain I had searched for the address and telephone number in the telephone directory in Seoul as I did not realise that there could be such a situation of not having an Indian office. Happily when I went again in 1972 there was an Indian Consulate General in Seoul, but about that later.

Wonshik sent his best wishes to me as I was leaving. My good friend Hisook was there to take me from the hotel to the airport and affectionately pressed a golden Parker ball pen-and-pencil set in my hand. I was being showered with gifts and gifts and my friends in Korea never let me spend a single *Won* while I was on their soil, at least I could not spend anything in their presence.

The last handshake over but Mrs Sull had another surprise and gift for me which again gave me the feeling that she is wonderfully thoughtful and considerate. Before she said 'bye bye' she handed over a copy of *Time* and *Newsweek* to me and said : 'I thought you might want some reading material.' Friends who could be so nice, so considerate and thoughtful about my requirements and be so alert to meet them even at the last few moments of my stay with them are rare. Hisook is such a one.

My dream of visiting Korea, the ancient Land of the Morning Calm as it is also called, was fulfilled. It was full of life, affection and consideration for me and my family, back home. The Sulls, when they were in India, did not get a chance to come to my house or to meet my family but they knew I had a family, a dear wife and two daughters and they sent their love and mementos for everyone of them.

Who in this vast world, could boast of such dear friends in a far off land ? I can !

Land, People, History

THE LAND of The Morning Calm can boast of a very old history, dating back to almost five thousand years in the past. It has grown to a modern, vibrant nation on the foundations of the traditional.

Korea is a typical peninsula and the divided South is more than 38,400 sq. miles, 45% of all Korea of over 85,000 sq. miles. A mountainous country of diverse geology, Korea is the geographical bridge between China and Japan. A country of 37 million people Korea has a recorded history of more than two thousand years, since about 2300 B.C. According to a legend, the son of the Creator Hwanung met a beautiful young girl when he came to earth. This girl was previously a bear and was only then transformed into a human being. On seeing her the Son of The Creator breathed on her. This resulted in the birth of a son who became the first King of Korea and his dynasty ruled Korea for more than a thousand years.

The recorded history of Korea dates back to the year 57 B.C. and the period called Three Kingdoms. The Kingdom of Silla was founded in south-east Korea, in 57 B.C. The Kingdom of Koguryo was established in 37 B.C. in north Korea and the third Kingdom was Paekche in south-west Korea founded in

18 B.C. Around what is now Pusan was yet another small Kingdom called Karak, which continued for 500 years. The three, as was natural, fought for hundreds of years till 660 when all the three came under Silla and that continued for another two hundred years.

The successor of Sillas was Koryo which was established in 935 by a General of Silla. This Koryo is modern Korea. Koryo lasted till 1392, giving place to General Yi whose Choson dynasty lasted till 1910 when the Japanese annexed Korea and occupied it for 35 years. It was during the Yi dynasty that arts, literature, and sciences flourished and the Korean alphabet Hangul was also developed. It is a picture-sque script and less complicated than the Chinese or the Japanese. It was during this regime that Chinese characters in movable types were printed, in 1403—much before the print type was developed in Europe. Hangul is the phonetic alphabet unlike the English which has more exceptions than the rule.

The Japanese had been the traditional enemies of Korea. China also did experiment with conquests but in the 17th century the Ming dynasty after occupying Korea withdrew upon acceptance of Chinese suzerainty by the Korean ruler. In practice Korea remained free and the Chinese accepted their tributary status. The Japanese on the other hand not only waged war for seven years in 1592 but also later. After defeating the Chinese and the Russians, Japan annexed Korea in 1910. This state of affairs continued till the defeat of Japan and end of the second World War. The Japanese had controlled Korea during these forty years or so by sheer brute force. Koreans were appointed to only minor posts and every senior administrator came from Japan. The Japanese police was everywhere suppressing Korean uprising wherever it occurred. But nationalism did not die at the hands of the aggressors,

it spread, without arms.

The end of second World War did not bring happiness for Korea, it brought independence but with its division of the country also. The Russians occupied all the territory north of the 38th parallel and the Americans south of the line.

General elections were ordered in Korea to determine its future and India was elected Chairman of the United Nations Commission responsible for holding free elections in the country. Under the Chairmanship of India free elections were indeed conducted and two-thirds of Korean people participated in them in May 1948 and established the free Republic of Korea. This was recognised by the United Nations as the only lawful government of Korea as the Russians never allowed the UN Commission to operate beyond the 38th parallel. The result was 30 million people could participate in the UN supervised elections and 10 million were deprived of a chance to express their freewill. The UN Commission was composed of Australia, Canada, China, El Salvador, France, India, the Philippines, Syria and Ukraine. It cannot be accused of a partisan manner but the Russians did not allow the people under its control to exercise their will freely.

The UN had taken a momentous decision to recognise South Korea as the legitimate and lawful government of Korea. Only that part had followed the letter and spirit of the earlier UN resolution. The UN had appointed a temporary commission for Korea which had given a report and the UN General Assembly now was faced with the report which acknowledged that there were difficulties in the way to implementation of the earlier resolution and the objectives (unification of Korea and general elections throughout the Korean Peninsula) could not be fully

accomplished. On the basis of the temporary commission's conclusions the UN General Assembly took a decision to give recognition to the government of South Korea which, as the resolution said, 'was having the effective control and jurisdiction over that of Korea where the Temporary Commission was able to observe and consult and in which the great majority of the people of all Korea reside ; this government is based on elections which were a valid expression of the free will of the electorate of that part of Korea and which were observed by the Temporary Commission and that this is the only such government in Korea'. Adopted on 12th December, 1948 the resolution also recommended to the member states and other nations that 'in establishing their relations with the government of the Republic of Korea they will take into consideration the fact that the UN has recognised the Republic of Korea as the sole lawful government in Korea'.

This significant resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly with 48 in favour, only 6 against (1 abstaining—Sweden, and three absent—Guatemala, Panama, Saudi Arabia). Those who voted against were, in addition to Yugoslavia, Byelo-Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Ukraine, and USSR itself. The 48 who voted in favour of recognising the Republic of Korea included countries from different continents and having different background and tradition. Another significant fact was that India had supported and voted for the resolution giving its approval for one Korean government who could be the legitimate government in Korea. Certainly it was to be noted that the authorities who denied access to UN Commission were the accused party in the dispute ; it could be clear to anyone that there was some power, namely the USSR, which wanted to keep its hold on a part of Korea by any means. On one hand you are a party to the earlier

resolution and now when it does not suit you, you back out unashamedly. The 48 who voted for the resolution included those also who are now important members of the non-aligned group. Some of the non-aligned of today had not been born or were not independent and therefore not members of the UN then.

Alas, politics interfered with a perfectly legitimate wish of the Korean people to have free elections and a unified Korea. This perfectly legal and just position was not liked by the other big power, the USSR, and what followed was a proof of that genuine complaint.

Things dragged on for some time and an uneasy, tension-filled atmosphere prevailed till at last the terrible events took place plunging Korea, and the UN, in an unending battle on and off the ground.

In June 1950 there was a massive invasion from the North and the UN took up the cause of the Republic of Korea. India was one of the countries who sided with the majority of UN members and condemned the North Korean invasion. India did not send combatant troops under the UN Command but sent Army Ambulance Corps instead. India continued to support the efforts of a just settlement in Korea but, in the UN and outside, the Russians opposed it. The Soviet Union at that time denounced the Indian initiatives and efforts ; the USSR representative at that time was Andrei Vyshinsky. China, in the meantime had changed its colours from KMT to Communist and therefore when a cease fire group was constituted consisting of India, Iran and Canada, Red China declared it illegal.

India policed the Armistice in Korea. Under General KS Thimayya India sent 5,000 jawans and 200 officers who did a difficult and thankless job of maintaining law and order at the borders as well as repatriating prisoners of war. India was also Chairman of the Neutral Nation's Repatriation Commission. It was a

tough job well done and brought appreciation from well meaning quarters.

In 1953 the Armistice agreement was signed at Panmunjom but that seems to have settled the borders of the divided country permanently at the 38th parallel instead of facilitating its unification. But about that later.

Korea for several centuries has been preserving its identity inspite of being sandwiched between the two giants, Japan and China, one for its economic growth and the other for its size. The Koreans are homogeneous race and are distinct from the Japanese and the Chinese. They are descendants from the nomadic tribes of Mongolia and the Caucasian people of western Asia and that in a way has enabled them to preserve both the characteristics of the Oriental and the Occidental. They are a tough and strong people more rugged than the Chinese and the Japanese who are supposed to be more delicate.

The population of Korea in 1978 was 37 million out of which about 18.6 million are males and 18.3 million females. There are 101.5 males to 100 females. Density keeps on increasing and in 1976 it was 363 per sq km. The population kept on rising at the rate of 2.7% during 1960-66 but fell to 2.3 in 66-70 and registered a further drop to 1.9% during 1970-75. For the last fifteen years there has been an effective family planning drive, hence the drop in growth rate.

The Koreans have been migrating to other parts of the world also, the favourite being Japan and now the United States. They used to go to Manchuria in olden times but since the communist take over in China the south Koreans cannot and will not go there. There are more than 6 lakh Koreans in Japan. The migration from North Korea to South was of the order of 2 million since 1945.

The Capital, Seoul, grew at a fantastic rate during the last quarter of a century. From 1·5 m in 1949 it grew to 7·2 m in 1976. It is the heart throb of the dynamic, vibrant country, a sprawling pulsating metropolis of the Republic. It was established during the Yi dynasty in 1392 exactly a hundred years before Christopher Columbus discovered America. Seoul is the hub of the Republic, the centre of political, economic and cultural, trading, educational and religious activities. To live in the capital city is always an attractive proposition in any country, but more so in Korea where Seoul is centre of everything. It is an ancient city of five hundred years and still preserves something of the old but at the same time is a most modern city in more senses than one. On the one hand there are palaces, shrines and old monuments and on the other there are most modern hotels, shopping centres and parks. Very few capitals in the world could rightly claim to have a perfect blend of ancient and the modern. Seoul is one of the rare ones to do so. There is so much to see and admire in Seoul. Its busy life, its beautiful places of entertainment, its palaces and its museums are all there presenting a feast for the eyes.

The other major city is the port of Pusan which also became known during the Korean War when that was the only area left with the UN Command. It is a flourishing port now and the second largest city of Korea. There are a few others like Taegu, Inchon (famous for War-time landing by Gen MacArthur of the US Army which saved Korea), Kwangju, Taejon and Panmunjom, the border town known for the innumerable rounds of talks between the two opposing commands, North Korean and the UN Command. Everywhere there is history, culture or natural beauty. Some of the big industries are located at Ulsan, Pohang

etc. Pusan has a sobre place worth a visit by everyone where the dead of 16 countries which assisted Korea during the war lie buried.

Any account of the history and the people of Korea will remain incomplete if the Korean flag is not mentioned. Indeed the flag of Korea is as interesting as it is endowed with deep meaning. It symbolises the mysticism, philosophy and deep thoughts of the East.

My friend Im was the first to explain to me and my friends in the United States the meaning of Korean National Flag. Later I read more about it and became more fascinated. The flag is the symbol, the inspiration and the repository of all that is ancient knowledge, philosophy and mysticism of the Orient.

The Korean national flag consists of a circle, and three lines in each of the four corners. The circle is divided by a curve into two equal halves, one in blue and the other in red. The upper is red which represents Yang and the blue section the Um — that is an ancient symbol of the universe as originated in China. These two opposites — in perfect balance — express dualism of the cosmos: fire and water, day and night, light and darkness, construction and destruction, masculine and feminine, active and passive, heat and cold, plus and minus etc etc.

The flag's theme of balance and harmony is very interesting, as my friend told us. Kindness and cruelty are perfectly balanced in the universe. If you are kind and considerate towards your child it is definitely good but you are also at the same time spoiling your child and weakening him, he may become easy going, wicked or dishonest. That will mean you have not been kind to the child but cruel to him. That is the balance and harmony of the two opposite thoughts and philosophy.

At each corner there are three lines or bars. Each set is different. There are three unbroken lines on the

top left corner which stand for heaven. The three broken lines opposite (right lower) represent the earth. Top right (two broken, middle unbroken) stands for water and the opposite (lower left, two lines with the middle broken) symbolises fire.

The Korean flag or the symbol is also called Tae Geug. It is on white and the lines are black. It makes a serene and mystic flag, a rather uncommon thing these days but one must remember that Korea is not one of those young countries with no past. It has a past, a history and a philosophy to be proud of.

In reality the symbolism of the Korean flag can have limitless meaning and interpretation. It may have an academic exercise in reasoning to sharpen your logic, may be it is for the development of your poetic imagination. The duality is there to be interpreted in various ways, of course it may be likened to the sun and the moon, heaven and earth, youth and old age, beauty and ugliness, truth and deceit, success and failure, to happiness and misery and so on and on.

Then again the bars also can denote varied moral teachings. Two short bars should be protected by the stronger (the longer ones), long bar should be protected by the short bars. Like should cling to like just as the three long bars are together and the six short bars are also together. Then there are the unlike ones, the grouping of the mixed ones should denote co-existence or tolerance—one of the traits of the Oriental character.

It is regarded significant that the Korean flag is not to draw any specific meaning. It is supposed to be a symbolic and philosophic representation of the mystical East. It is food for thought, inspires one to read various meanings of the universe, the Creator and the created. That's why it is said that the Korean flag is unique in the world. One can't agree more with the statement.

5

Second Time—And Lucky

IT IS often said that if one has been to a country once the chances are that one will go there again. It has come true with me in several cases but, I must confess, not in all the cases so far. Korea is one of those countries which had attracted me immensely and I long to see it again and again. The second opportunity came to me after six and a half years and the news was broken to me not in India but when I was on a visit to Egypt. It was, I thought, appropriately done by my good and kind friend, Dr Choi, who was the Korean Ambassador in Cairo then, fresh from a memorable Indian posting.

In Cairo when I went to see him he casually mentioned to me that before leaving for Cairo he had finalised the plans for the visit of an Indian journalist to Korea and that the same Indian journalist was at that very moment in Cairo. He was sure that the journalist would like to avail of the opportunity. I knew instinctly who was the guy. It was I of course.

To me visits abroad mean travel and education, meeting people and visiting places. I am a Brahmin by profession and I can not decline an invitation like that. I have, I am sure, severely bitten by the travel bug and move quite frequently in India and abroad. I have

done that on invitation, on my own shoe-string budget and also on behalf of my newspaper. There was no difficulty for me to accept yet another invitation for travel and that too to Korea, one of my most favourite countries.

I was already on a European tour, rather extended one, on a shoe-string budget with my wife. She had left for India on the last leg of her trip and I was spending yet another week in Cairo when I got this invitation from the Korean Ambassador. Since I was already on a foreign tour I did not quite figure out the modalities of my journey to Korea which could also be *via* India. It also meant another visit to the Reserve Bank of India in New Delhi and another round of formalities. The authorities in India were not as liberal as they are now though I never had any difficulties with the External Affairs Ministry or the Reserve Bank. To journalists they are normally kind and understanding. In Cairo my friends had another idea. They got me the formal invitation there itself and saved me the trips to the Bank in New Delhi. With the new plans I was a transit passenger as I landed in New Delhi to catch a plane to Korea. As things turned out I got a flight to Bangkok *via* Kathmandu and in the process got an opportunity to see the Nepali capital also, an unscheduled trip for sight seeing which came as a bonus.

Even before I left Cairo for Korea, *via* India, Ambassador Choi seemed to have taken me in his charge as his guest right from the day he told me of his plans for my visit to Korea. He hosted two dinners for me and a third was given to me by the Korean Press Officer in Cairo, Mr Yu. The Yu family then consisted of one wife and one child, and both were sweet. The child, a son, was named Hon Don (if I remember correctly) but the Egyptian maid servant thought it was Mohammad. Mr Yu told me in the presence of that

maid servant that the name was indeed Mohammad. It was fun watching this young Mohammad, a toddler of less than a year. Yu not only fed me but also, five days later, transported me to the airport—quite a distance it was—and saw me off at midnight. That was again a taste of famed Korean hospitality even outside Korea.

I spent minimum time in New Delhi in transit where also the Korean friends, Lew and Kang, came to see me and arrange everything for onward journey. As it happened the connecting flight was from Kathmandu. I had to catch a Korean Airlines flight from Bangkok as the KAL flight does not, unfortunately, pass through New Delhi or any other Indian airport.

I reached Kathmandu by the morning RNAC flight and had to catch the onward flight to Bangkok. It was a Thai Airways flight but the moment I set my foot on the way to the plane that Thai aircraft was closing its doors, literally on me. It was a funny thing but I gesticated and shouted to the staff to wait for me but it was all in vain. There was still a distance of about twenty metres between me and the plane.

I did not have a choice but to go back to the city and to the Korean Consulate General. There again I got the hospitality of the Koreans in yet another country. I had the whole day and also the next day till afternoon to catch the next available flight. That was real bonus. I attended the Independence Day reception at the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, and next day went sight-seeing in the city—courtesy Prof. Prakash Chandra Sharma, who is just like my brother, and his wife. Prof Sharma was working for the Indian Co-operation Mission and Bhabhi (his wife) for the Indian school. They took me round the city, the temples and to home for a wonderful lunch. They saw me off at the airport, and luckily, I was well in time.

It was nearly evening when I reached Bangkok for the connecting KAL flight to Seoul. The flight was comfortable but I was in store for another surprise, pleasant of course. I had an economy class ticket to and from Seoul but the Korean Airlines staff at the airport knew better. The smiling young lady at the KAL counter took my ticket, went inside and when she came out still giving her sweet smile she had put a blue tag of First Class on my ticket. On my persistent querry she told me she had chosen to exercise her discretion and that I was her honoured guest, a first class passenger. What more one could ask for! A fine airline, a first class seat and some beautiful air-hostesses to take care of me all the way to Seoul.

I had till then never travelled by the Korean Airlines and did not know what it is to be in the safe, careful and hospitable hands of the staff of KAL. On this flight and also on my way back from Seoul to Hong Kong I travelled KAL and I can say without fear of contradiction that it is one of the finest airlines in the world. I have travelled on more than a score of top airlines of leading countries of the world and I know what I am talking.

I thought the cabin crew would find it difficult to satisfy me as I am a vegetarian, by choice. The smiling air hostess of KAL, however, was an experienced hand and produced so many eats, all pure VEG, to my delight and satisfaction. I like to eat and if I get fruit instead of wines I am happy. KAL had the choicest of wines but as soon as the cabin crew came to know of my choice they spared nothing to get me some of the choicest fruits. The smiling hostess came to me almost every five minutes to attend to my comforts, feed me, give me Korean dolls and chocolates which also I love. It was a perfect flight and in two hours I reached Hong Kong. Just a short half an hour and

so and we were up again for Seoul.

Kimpo airport was reached in another three hours and I was received by a lanky Korean protocol man and a driver. I discovered that the thin man who was to become my guide for the next week of stay in Korea was a black belt Karate expert. I don't know why he was chosen to escort me; was it for my safety or the safety of Koreans from me. In any case Kim Hwa Il, my guide, was a highly organised man who did a wonderful job of assisting me, taking me places, arranging incredible things for me while I enjoyed the fabulous hospitality of the Korean government.

My driver of the big car was Shin Hyun O, I could not understand what this O stood for, perhaps it was some other Korean form which could not be rightly expressed in English. Anyway, my driver and the companion did much better than I had expected. We went to my old hotel, Bando, where I had stayed in 1966 also.

One of the first things I did, or rather asked for, was to find out if my friend Hisook Sull was in town and how Wonshik was faring and keeping his growing industrial empire under his control. The other information was about a beautiful young lady, Miss Alka Mahadkar—chosen 'Miss Delhi' not long ago—who was doing her Ph.D. at a University in Korea. I did not know her, had never met her, had not even seen her being crowned 'Miss Delhi' in the beauty contest. My good friend Ambassador Choi had told me that a beauty from India had been awarded a scholarship to study Korean language and to work for her thesis of Ph.D. Firstly, this was a pleasant surprise for me—a beauty with brains so far from India; An Indian girl doing her Ph.D. in Korea. It so happened that she was interested in doing research about the peace-keeping role of the Indian army during the Korean War and after.

I was curious to know the young lady and I told my guide Kim that if he could find out her address I would like to meet her.

I talked to Wonshik who informed me that Hisook was not in town, she had gone to United States to attend the marriage of her brother. I was a little disappointed. Here was I after six years and one of my very good friends was not there. Of course I had not written to her that I was paying a 'state visit' to Korea as I myself did not get much notice. In any case I was staying in Korea for a week and I thought she might come back in the meantime. Mr Sull of course was his usual self, nice, friendly and hospitable.

Kim returned in the evening to inform me that he had located Miss Alka Mahadkar and that she would come to meet me the next day. How fast and organised this guide of mine was! I had not told him the University she was studying—there are a number of them in Seoul—and there was some confusion in Kim's mind about the name also. Kim thought that the name was Miss Delhi—poor soul, he did not know that Delhi was the city and not the feminine name. Nevertheless he located Alka and I thanked him for not only doing that but also arranging the meeting. How we became very good friends—Alka and her whole family—and how her marriage partner was introduced to her at my home in New Delhi subsequently and how we are sort of one family is a fascinating story in itself.

Alka met me the next day and told me that her interest in Korea was because of her father who had been in Korea with Gen Thimayya and Gen Thorat in the Repatriation Commission, during the Korean War and after. Col D.A. Mahadkar's account must have fired the imagination of Alka who decided to do a thesis on the role of Indian Army in peace-keeping operations in Korea. It was a perfect subject and she was making

use of every minute of her stay in Korea.

Alka was the real cultural ambassador of India, confessed Indian Consul General Anand who was all praise for her. This Indian girl had really won a name for herself. She not only staged classic plays in Korean language and raised money for the flood affected Koreans but also topped the foreign students in learning the Korean language. Alka was very good at dramatics and did a signal service in other fields also when she started teaching Hindi to Korean students. At one point of time there were sixty students of Hindi in Korea. Alka not only introduced and taught Hindi she saw to it that after she went to India a teacher would be available to the Koreans to continue her good work.

I instantly developed a liking for Alka and accepted her as one of my daughters. She is just a few years older than my eldest daughter, Sujata, and that was only because I married at a late age. Since then Alka's family and my own are very close. I wrote an article for the leading daily newspaper of India, *The Sunday Standard (Indian Express Sunday edition)* on Alka, entitled Indian Beauty with Brains Charms Koreans. It brought me a letter from the father of Alka, Col D.A. Mahadkar, who praised me and expressed his gratefulness for giving publicity to his daughter. It certainly heartened me but it was no obligation on any one what I had done. Alka richly deserved that and she had really brought Indians and Koreans nearer and has left a deep impression on the Koreans.

It is another interesting story how Alka and her husband-to-be met at our home in New Delhi, how they came close and eventually married. We were the only persons outside the immediate family of Vinod—Alka's talented, German language knowing journalist husband—who were special guests at their wedding. Vinod, a fellow journalist and Alka, just like my daughter, are

dear friends also. All went well till my younger daughter, Seema, discovered that the wedding has indeed created a lot of confusion for her. Before the marriage Alka was Didi (sister) to them and Vinod was Uncle. Now Uncle had married the sister. Either Vinod should become sister's husband or Alka, Aunty. My daughters now seem to have themselves solved the problem: well the problem remains but they are satisfied. Now Alka remains Didi and Vinod as Uncle. No body has any objection to this arrangement as Alka's brother is also brother to my daughters.

My second Korean visit enabled me to know this family with a Korean connection. Alka had charmed Koreans and a proof, if one is needed, is the prize photograph of Alka with President Park Chung Hee. The President had graciously invited Alka after her praiseworthy efforts to raise money for the flood victims. It was a signal service to fellow human beings and it was a unique honour for the Indian girl.

Floods in Korea are also frequent and big like India. When I was in Seoul in August that year there were floods. I telephoned my good friend Kim Sang Jin who said he can't meet me. A little surprised I asked him how was that and he replied that he is surrounded by waters and can not come out. Happily his phone was working unlike in some of the other countries, including my own, where telephones have a tendency to go out of order at the slightest pretext, more so when there is some water around. The phones go tipsy at the mere sight of water, what to talk of liquor. I could not do much to help my friend Kim and also could not meet him but the next thing I heard was that he was out of the marooned area and was on his way to Turkey to represent Korean Journalist Association. A brave man indeed and he got his reward—and challenge also—I am told he is the press attache for

his country in Ankara now.

My meeting with my old friend Kim Do Yon was pleasant as usual. He took me to his house where I met his charming family again. I have appreciated this gesture of meetings at houses of private citizens as it does most to bring two peoples nearer than a dozen meetings in the offices and hotels. In Korea I experienced my way of hospitality and though I can't say that it is typical oriental hospitality as I have experienced the same on my trip to the United States also. A western country, an affluent and highly materialistic and industrialised country also gave top priority to meetings at peoples level, in homes and small parties so that a freer exchange of ideas take place. Sadly I missed this sort of contacts in other countries—countries which boast of socialist societies but avoid socialisation at peoples' level. Any way that is a different subject altogether.

One of my first meetings, officially, was with the Minister of Culture and Information, my principal host, Mr Yun Ju Yung. He warmly greeted me and showed pleasure in the fact that I could make the trip. I expressed my gratefulness to him for the invitation and my delight at the opportunity of meeting some of my old friends. He assured me of all the facilities I could desire and told me not to hesitate if I needed something special. I thanked him profusely and told him that the hospitality organisation under him had taken care of everything.

The next day I met the Vice Foreign Minister Mr Yun Suk Heun and discussed the entire gamut of world politics with special interest to India and Korea. He agreed and emphasised the need for a direct dialogue between the two warring parties—be they India and Pakistan or North and South Korea. Minister Yun was no stranger to India having been there in

October 1971 and July 1972.

The day was spent in sight-seeing around Seoul and a visit to Ewha Women University where I met some outstanding educationists of the country.

My old friend Sull Wonshik had not forgotten me and he contacted me twice. He had become more busy since I saw him in 1966 but his concern for his old friend had not diminished. He sent his secretary to tell me about his programme of tours and business and fixed some time next week for an evening party. The same day Hong Yong Ki, my old roommate of U.S. fame, took me home. I had not met his charming wife earlier. She knew about me all from her husband and I became more acquainted with their family. A nice and informal family, like ours, and it was an evening well spent.

The next two days were spent outside Seoul and they were memorable in more ways than one. I was able to get a glimpse of the economic miracle that was being performed in the country and the tremendous development of cities and countryside was before me as I travelled by road to the southern most area, Pusan, visiting many places en route.

6

Seoul : With A Capital S

I was in Seoul for three days on my first visit and altogether for another five days on my second trip. Still I cannot say if I have seen half the city, its big and small areas and the typical Korean life. I did go round quite a bit but the city is too big to be seen, known and enjoyed thoroughly.

There is the bigness of Seoul no doubt and with it also the small houses in small lanes and suburbs. I visited a couple of those houses which from inside are good, clean and liveable. I might not have seen the real, common man's house, may be it was a one room hutment and may be there was poverty and want. I do not claim that Korea has become rich, is affluent and fully developed to meet everyone's needs. I have seen whatever of Korea I could see, I was not on an absolutely conducted tour where I could not go and meet the common man in the street. I used to walk about the places all alone though there was not much time for me to make forays into some unknown areas but I am sure there was no attempt to hide anything. In subsequent seven years the Korean capital has changed, I am told, beyond recognition.

I see pictures and read reports of new areas being developed. I come to know of the rows of elegantly

built multi-storied apartment houses making the new skyline of Seoul. I am a little apprehensive also because this huge construction work may destroy the Kotean tradition, the Korean soul. But can one help it ? In a huge effort of modernisation, keeping pace with everything that is growing and developing around you, can one remain where one was fifty, twenty, ten or even five years ago ? Seoul has changed, is changing and will surely keep on changing, but, I know the Korean mind. It will always honour the tradition. It will always love its greatness and its good things, its history and its culture.

Seoul is the historic city though not very old, from Korean standards. It was established about a hundred years before the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. The city now has a population of seven million and is still growing.

The capital is no longer the seat of Kings and Chieftains but captains of the government and industry are very much active here. Seoul has been the centre of learning since the olden times and continues to be so. It is a prestigious city to live in as the national life tend to centre round the capital, more so in case of Seoul.

There are palaces, shrines and monuments in Seoul. But Seoul has another speciality of its own, not many western capitals can claim that, it has beautifully mingled the ancient with the modern. The old and the new blend perfectly, stand side by side to the delight of the serious student of ancient history and the casual tourist in a hurry.

Seoul to me looked a big, organised metropolis capable of providing all the attractions of the west and all the charms of the east. There is everything for the visitor. If you are interested in classical things—in music, dance, arts, operas—you get them in plenty. To a lover of the modern things Seoul offers a very

wide choice. Korea has learnt to cater to the visitor and Seoul tops in that art.

The capital abounds in palaces, starting from the Kyongbok and Toksu Palaces. I have described some of the tourist attractions of the capital in the earlier chapter and I will recommend a more thorough tour for the more serious visitor and the one who has a little more time. He must see the city's heritage and have a glimpse into them.

Toksu palace is the repository of Korean history of at least five hundred years, of the famous Yi dynasty. Then there is the Kyongchon-sa temple, a magnificent marble pagoda situated in the premises of Kyongbok palace.

Shopping in Seoul is a pleasure, be it only window shopping. The shops are full of handicraft, silk, brass-ware, jewellery, wooden chests, boxes and shell inlaid works of exquisite beauty. Topaz and amethyst are the two lovely stones that one comes across commonly with fine items of jewellery, and of course jade also. Embroidery, dolls of all shapes and sizes and costumes and scrolls or screens are also some of the most popular things to buy in Korea.

For tourists there is no tax liability. There are hundreds of shops selling these items in Seoul and other cities. Big department stores sell fixed price things. There are beautiful shopping arcades in Seoul as well as other cities depending on their size.

Some of the other popular souvenir items are lacquer-ware and ginseng, the wonder herb of Korea which is gaining popularity all over the world. Lacquerware is produced in several colours and is beautifully inlaid with silver, shell, brass etc., and is the most common item of purchase.

Seoul and Korea's other cities are so full of good items for every one that one must be prepared to spend

more money and keep some provision for excess baggage. I had to spend \$ 30 as excess baggage on my shopping and presentation articles that I carried with me on my journey back home. But that should not deter you from buying as the things you get in Korea are not available elsewhere, specially in the west.

Seoul is a city for the people who are on the move. There are nice tea rooms where one can chat and spend hours together waiting for someone else to come. There are elaborate restaurants where the busy city's business is also conducted in comfort and style. There are endless shopping arcades where one could spend hours even if one does not want to buy anything. Window-shopping is itself great fun, you know the products and the prices, and if you are enchanted enough you go inside and pick them up.

For window-shopping and real shopping one could go to the posh Myongdong district where there are stores, both small and big, displaying a very wide variety of local and imported goods. For eating there are fine Korean, Chinese, Japanese and western style restaurants and places where you get two or three styles of food.

Art objects and curios are the other attractions of Seoul. There are numerous shops big and small, but full, which sell a wide choice of art objects. It's not that only foreigners buy these art objects, the prosperity of Korea has enabled the Koreans also to go in for purchase of these things.

Seoul has a fantastic night life—all styles—to suit all pockets. There is a symphony western style, a folk dance-music Korean fashion and an absolutely first class mixed fare at some of the more elegant and expensive showplaces like Walker Hill and Ambassador, Grand and other hotels. At Walker Hill the pacific night club is fantastic featuring Korea's top singers and

entertainers. They also have some top class foreign performers. It is a big place but is supposed to be a modest one so far as the expenses are concerned. One of the best in the East. Private enterprise has enabled the Koreans to go in for hard work and reap rich dividends. Elsewhere I have mentioned about a small photo studio to show that hard working Korean young men and women do make a good job of things and do get a decent return. From 4 in the morning till midnight Seoul is awake, working and enjoying. From midnight till dawn, 4 O'clock, the city sleeps because of a night curfew. Though the threat from the northern half of Korea, from infiltrators is always there Seoul has not learnt to fear. They say the threat may be there, we don't doubt, but the Republic of Korea now is not what it was in 1950. Seoul citizens are hardy, strong, disciplined and then there are the very wide roads in the heart of the city which can be at any time converted into a perfect airfield for immediate take off and landing of air force planes. It will not take more than five minutes to do so as the road at strategic places is wide enough for such conversion.

Seoul has a strong body and a soul too !

In The Heartland

ON THE Prosperity Road from Seoul to Pusan I saw the signs of hard work of the farmers and the government, the indelible mark of the Korean War in the form of a cemetery and the incredible economic miracle which has been an eye-opener for the entire world, specially of the third world, the developing world. On the way I also saw the historical places and the *Samadhi* (Tomb) of an Indian, Col Unni Nair, whose remains lie buried in the Korean soil, the tomb being raised by a grateful nation. I will deal separately with some of the aspects and subjects mentioned here to do justice to them.

I left Seoul at about 10-30 in the morning of 20th August. It was picturesque all the way and we stopped at Chu Pung-Ryung, about 220 km from Seoul. It is about half way on the Expressway, between Seoul and Pusan. It was a scenic sight and enjoyable. A river flowed nearby, there was a nice restaurant where we had our lunch. It was afternoon when we reached Kyung-ju or Kyong-ju, a historic place of much importance, perhaps the repository of the richest treasure of ancient Korean history. It used to be the capital of old Silla dynasty which ruled Korea (The Three Kingdoms) between B.C. 57 and A.D. 935.

It is said that Kyong-ju city itself is a museum without walls. It has several remains of the Silla' rule including royal tombs, temples and other monuments. It also can boast of one of the most ancient astronomical observatories, and the dilapidated remains of palaces and fortresses. The Korean government, rightly, established a branch of the National Museum to house and preserve thousands of old items.

In Korea K and G are mutually replaceable. There are others also like B and P and that's why Pusan becomes Busan and Pul Kuksa becomes Bul Guksa. But that's because of the English language, seems sounds can be misunderstood and then misspelt.

Pul Kuksa temple dates back to 6th century and is the most beautiful of its kind in Korea. For historical value this place is a must for every tourist and student of history. For those who want to go out of Seoul to find beauty and ancient history Kyong-ju is the right place.

There is a direct train connection with Seoul, or the incomparable expressway will take one to Kyong-ju from Seoul. The train connection is an overnight one—you go sleeping and wake up in Kyong-ju to a world of ancient art and beauty.

Pul-Kuksa and Ulsan are two different places and diverse in nature. One is the ancient, historical place for the tourists and the other is a modern industrial complex for the investor and the economist. At Ulsan one can see giant refinery and steel, fertilizer, power plants and the like. Because of its industrial activity it has also become some sort of a modern touristic centre where entrepreneurs and economists etc flock from different parts of the world. Consequently there have sprung up many hotels and places of attraction.

At Ulsan I saw some of the industrial activity and was entertained by the Mayor Mr Kim Jang-ju who

graciously presented a badge of the city to me as a memento. Ulsan produces fertilizers and India imports some from here. After my visit to Korea and Ulsan I knew that the bumper crop of foodgrains in India has its Korean contribution also.

One of the enlightening experiences of my visit to Ulsan was a session of briefing by the Korean Red Cross team at a power production plant. Goldstar Power Company had hosted that briefing, both ways, as the idea was to acquaint the negotiators with the progress made by the Republic of Korea in different fields before they go to talk with the North Koreans. It must have helped the Talkers tremendously as they would be fully armed with the fact of economic prosperity of the Republic to face the tough Communist theoreticians of the North. It certainly helped them and I as a government guest at that time also benefited by the briefings. I don't remember the name of the leader then but it was not Ambassador Bum Suk Lee, now the Korean envoy in India. He used to be the Chief Red Cross negotiator in earlier years. Mr Lee was at that time Ambassador to Tunisia and was doing very well there. Koreans were and still are, on an economic offensive selling their products, buying useful material from abroad and rendering all the help for construction work specially in the Middle East. They know the art and science of diplomacy which is now also dictated by economics, and for that one has to build a powerful industrial base. Ulsan provided such a base, sound, efficient and profitable. About economic miracles I will mention later in detail.

After lunch it was time for journey to Pusan where I had to reach the same day. The afternoon of arrival was spent in sightseeing—memorial tower and the UN Cemetery. The evening was at a movie titled the Palace Women, with a beautiful heroine named Yun Chung Hee.

When I see a beautiful woman and if I can, I ask her name and make a note of it. This practice has not made much difference to my acquaintances and has not enlarged my circle of beautiful women considerably but one does not lose hope. Someday this heroine might come to India and I will then be probably the only man who will recall seeing a movie of hers.

In Pusan we stayed at Tong-Nae Tourist Hotel which had an inviting and interesting air about it. It is a simple hotel with modern comforts and one can be as happy there as in the big city hotels. The trip to Pusan was a short one and I did not go to see the port or the beach. Seeing the port is to say farewell and to go to the beach one must have an appropriate companion and a swim suit—I had neither. This is with due respect to my companion and guide Kim Hwa Il who was very courteous and attentive, helpful and intelligent, and of course considerate to an unimaginable extent.

On way back to Seoul the next day I visited the tomb of Col Nair near Teagu or Daegu—T and D are also akin in Korean language. Col Nair, and his tomb also deserve a separate mention.

At about 4 in the afternoon we were back in Seoul at Bando Hotel and in time for another round of entertainment. The host this time was Director of Korean Overseas Information Service, Mr Lee Kyoo Hyun, a jovial, lively man of about my age.

The party at another Kisaeng House was a more lively affair than the first one I had been to. That particular House was a favourite of Mr Lee or the company was of still younger people I don't know but there was more of dancing and merry-making, jokes and laughter. There was the Deputy Director Mr Dong Won Cho and a couple of Kims—I refrain from mentioning the names for being accused of mixing them up (sorry my friends). There were, as usual, beautiful

girls making all out efforts to make us comfortable with their talk and food, dances and drinks. I was the guest of honour and all attention was naturally paid to me and I felt on top of the world. However it is a fact that the educated and cultured girls trained in the art of entertainment knew much, much more about men than I know of women. But that is beside the point and irrelevant. I was in good company and was looked after perfectly by the girls, singers and dancers, at the House. There was a fine feast of songs and dances, typical Korean. One of the younger entertainers gave a superb performance with the drums. It was one of the most charming shows I have ever seen.

The night was advancing as we bade farewell to the lovely ladies of the House. I had picked up one word of thank you and farewell. I said Khamzahamida—and got a charming smile and a bow from the courteous partner of mine. It was really a relaxing evening after two days out of Seoul and I prepared for the next two busy days in the Capital of meetings and interviews.

8

Back To Seoul And Farewell

THE NEXT day I started with a call by my friend Kim Do Yon who was all the time kind and considerate to me. He came to the hotel in the morning and that day proved to be very hectic and useful. The first item on the agenda was a visit to newspapers *Seoul Shinmun* and *Dong-A Ilbo*, of my old friend Kim Seung Yul who of course was not in Korea but in London and whom I had met only the previous month in London. I met the Managing Editor of *Seoul Shinmun* Mr. Nam Jae Hee and the Managing Editor of *Dong-A*, Mr. Park Kwon Sang who was one of the firsts on the Multi-National Foreign Journalists Project of the United States then at Northwest University, the Director at both the centres was the same redoubtable 'Papa Floyd,' Prof. Floyd Gordon Arpan. It was a nice meeting full of pleasantaries and exchange of ideas on a wide variety of subjects.

A meeting with Indian Consul General (it was not a full embassy till then) Mr Anand was illuminating. He not only praised the hard work of the Koreans but also commended their desire to remain free and democratic. There were certain circumstances and constraints but one had to watch the situation closely before making adverse comments on the tough administration in Seoul.

As a direct result of the Korean War and the division of the country hard decisions had to be made and implemented, he felt, and I agreed. I will mention these in detail a little later.

One of the most interesting programmes was the interview at the KBS, Korea Broadcasting System. It was unique in the sense that it has not been tried in India, at least not to my knowledge. I was interviewed on the TV by two persons—one in Korean and the other in English—simultaneously. The English interviewer was Mr Koh (another of the Northwestern—Indiana Project) and that in Korean was a young lady, Myung Shik, of the Orient Press, if I remember correctly. It was something like this; the Korean interviewer introduces me to the listeners-viewers followed by a question in Korean and translated into English. I reply to it in English and then the Korean version is also telecast for the benefit of a large number of TV watchers. It went on for about half an hour, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Translation into the other language—first the question in Korean and then the answer in English and translation in Korean—did not present any problem and everything went on very well. My friend Kim Do-Yon was present throughout the interview and complimented me on a very interesting programme. The Korean Broadcasting system has perfected this sort of programmes with foreigners, they can do it in any language. I wondered if the Indian Radio/TV could try similarly, it is very easy, only the participants and more so the interviewers have to be very alert and intelligent.

I was told that the programme would be telecast at seven-thirty or so in the morning. I felt bad for I thought that was the worst time and nobody would be free to watch it. But sensing my feelings I was assured that it was the peak hour for the TV viewers as it was precisely

the time for breakfast and people do switch on their TV sets just to watch the programmes. The whole family watches the programmes. I felt elated. This I got confirmed later by others also. So Mr Bhatnagar was present at every house and was watched carefully.

Afternoon saw me in the new posh and big office building of my friend Sull Wonshik. He had a comparatively modest office when I met him in 1966 but by his sheer intelligence and organising capability he had expanded his business and industry. It was a big nice building and Wonshik took me into his private office for some informal chat. He again told me he was sorry that Hisook was not in Korea, a disappointment which he shared with me. But Wonshik assured me he will leave no room for complaint and will see to it that I don't miss much in Korea. He, as usual was right. He did not spare any effort to make me comfortable, and spent time with me inspite of his very busy schedule.

During the six years or so since we met I had become the Chief of News Bureau of my paper and Wonshik had become bigger industrialist and also a diplomat—he was the Honorary Consul General of Panama, an honour for the outstanding cooperation and drive as a successful socialite, industrialist and businessman. Mr Sull wanted me to spare time for another of the memorable evenings and I could not be more agreeable to the idea of spending some time with my old friend. Wonshik regretted that much of my time was being taken by the government schedule, as I was a government guest, but was happy that we in any case would be able to spend some time together in the evening.

Korea's innumerable attractions include the demonstration of the art of self defence—Taekwon-do. It may be compared to Karate of Japanese reputation

though I had not seen either till then. I had heard about it and at lunch time when I mentioned to my guide, Kim Hwa Il, he promised to see what could be done about it. In an hour or so he came back to inform me that a special demonstration was arranged for me in the afternoon. I was delighted and admired the efficiency of the hosts, their consideration for me and the promptness and organising ability—you ask and you are provided with whatever you want. It proved to be a thrilling experience and I was able to see a wonderful exposition of the art and science of self defence—Korean style—by young boys and girls at two different places. I shall mention about Tae Kwon Do in detail elsewhere.

At the evening party and dinner with Sull Wonshik I met for the first time a brother of Hisook, Mr Limb. Also present at the dinner were some of the relations and assistants of Sull Wonshik and we formed an enjoyable company. It was a very sophisticated place, that Kisaeng House, and the conversation and the dances were of a very high order.

Sull is a very thoughtful host and did not forget to send me a present the next day. He has been doing that ever since he met me and I have no means to reciprocate. He goes on in his merry way and makes me—and I am sure all his friends—comfortable and happy whenever they are at hand, in his 'territory'.

The final day of my stay in Korea was spent at Inchon and at Kim Do You's house before I was finally given a farewell at the official ceremonial lounge of the giant Kimpo airport.

Inchon is the place which was very much in the news during the War. Gen MacArthur then had landed the American marines which turned the tide in favour of the United Nations Forces. It was a historic occasion and MacArthur became a household word in Korea. This was done at a time when almost the entire south

Korea was overrun by the Communist forces comprising thirteen divisions of North Korean forces backed by Russian guns and tanks. MacArthur undertook the task of easing the pressure on Pusan and the UN garrison and successfully organised the landing. It was a great risk but then an experienced General has to take risks to win wars.

Before the Inchon landing the position of UN Command had become very precarious. The North Koreans continued with tenacity and determination their well planned offensive. The only way to halt it was to land troops in the rear, at the back of enemy lines. MacArthur did it in the face of initial opposition in the US. The place he chose was Inchon, some 20 miles West of Seoul. He saved Korea for the anti-Communist free world and earned the gratitude of everyone, though he had annoyed some of the higher ups in Washington D.C.

Korea and Inchon in particular have commemorated the event and the successful campaign by erecting a statue to MacArthur and putting up a nice park—The Liberty Park. A round of the park, was taken rather hurriedly, as we had to return to Seoul the same afternoon. The statue of Gen MacArthur is a fine tribute to the man who more than anybody else saved Korea from the invaders.

A quick, final, visit to Kim Do Yon's house and an exchange of gifts and I was on my way to the airport to catch a flight to Hong Kong. It was the completion of my wonderful trip to Korea, my second, and I am sure one of many more I have to undertake to this wonderfully hospitable country.

At the airport another pleasant surprise awaited me. My guide Kim had brought a box, biggish looking, beautifully packed which I dare not open and peep to see what was inside. I had correctly guessed what

could be there. I will tell you later what it was. There was another box of lilting Korean folk music—all LP records. I am interested in folk music and knowing it my hosts came up with this selection. The box also included record of my favourite 'Ari Rang.' Ari Rang and its beautiful tune can challenge any in the world for its melody and charm. I am told that this old folk song is one and the only item on which North and South Korea could agree when the two were trying to field one combined team for an international sporting event. I heard 'Ari Rang' for the first time in 1966 at the house of entertainment in Seoul and have since been in love with the music and with the sentiments. The Korean pavilion at the last trade fair in New Delhi had this lilting tune played at the exhibition and must have charmed many like me.

Before I left Bando Hotel for the airport Sull Wonsik's representative, Mr Herm, who had come to me previously also conveying his master's greetings and message for a meeting later in the week, came with a fine tray of shell inlaid work, a speciality of this region. I always overweigh when I leave Korea, laden with gifts from friends and own purchases. At times one has to pay the excess baggage charges but who minds the insignificant tens of dollars when one has earned tonnes of goodwill and affection from well wishers. Those gifts from friends and the government of Korea are a cherished treasure. I and my whole family pay special attention to preserve them.

The first doll I got from Korea was of course from my friend Hisook, way back in 1965 after she returned to Korea from an extended trip where I met the Sulls in New Delhi. The same doll is still with us though in the absence of a glass case it is a little worn out and its age is showing. But I am loath to discard it. The doll once in a while gets a face-lift and is up again to

serve the cause of Indo-Korean friendship. Giving gifts is not the monopoly of the people in this region, an Oriental custom though it is, but the way the Koreans do it is full of affection and friendliness, and not a ritual.

It was around 5.30 in the evening when I took leave of Kim and Korea and bid farewell to all who made my stay pleasant and educative. I boarded a Korean Airlines jet. On board the same flight I saw some very tall young men and women—looking very much Korean. One mistakenly associates Koreans with Japanese, short and Mongoloid, but that band of youngsters was different. Not being able to curb my curiosity I asked one of the tall young men who they were. I was pleasantly surprised to know that they were the Korean National Basketball team—of men and women—going to take part in the Munich Olympic Games. I remembered my friend Im Sang Jae's words in US back in 1965 that the Koreans are taller than the Japanese and are certainly different. He was right!

Emphasis On Education

I WAS told that there is almost cent per cent literacy in Korea. That might not be exactly true but among the people below fifty years of age it definitely is so. One of the reasons given to me then was that young men had to serve in the armed forces for a period of time and there they have to pass examinations. That's how the whole generation has become not only literate but also educated to a certain level. For the past many years none is drafted to the armed forces if he has not passed a certain examination. The result is, there is no young man who is illiterate. The older generation may have a sprinkling of semi-literate people but not to a significant extent, the non-formal education and adult literacy campaign are taking care of that aspect also.

Official figures about literacy are astonishing. In 1945 the literacy figure was 15% but in the sixties it went up to 80%. In the seventies further progress was made and the latest figure of literacy is over 90%. This is remarkable indeed !

Seeing half a dozen Universities and institutions of higher learning in Seoul itself I was wondering about the number of students in the entire country. Soon I was told about them and I began to take more interest in the educational activities in Korea. Out of a

population of 37 million in Korea over 10 million are students—primary, higher secondary and vocational put together. Besides, a systematic scheme of adult education—which we also call a non-formal education—has paid rich dividends. Education in Korea is geared to a definite purpose—to make the people aware of the need for independence, and democracy.

Being so near the Communists from the North the people in the South have to be systematically told about the merits of freedom and democracy, free choice and economic competition. The results of this education are outstanding for, little South Korea has grown many-fold since the Korean War. Not only it is challenging the big countries in the west but also the economic giant in the East—Japan. All this is due to fast spread of education and training in various fields of economic activity.

Korea has laid stress on education in all its aspects including elementary, higher, vocational, scientific and technical as well as non-formal. Another important aspect of education has also not been neglected and that is spiritual. Many of the modern, industrialised countries have neglected this aspect to their cost and have promoted materialism. Korea, an ancient and traditional country in more ways than one did not forget the rich spiritual heritage and had insisted on its inclusion in the educational system.

In the Republic of Korea there is a movement for reforms, to revitalise the society and a regular movement for that is on. It is called Yushin which aims at making education an instrument of individual and national development. This necessitates emphasis on learning Korean history and cultural heritage. The community-oriented educational system, Yushin, also stresses spiritual education. There is a Charter of National Education in Korea that mentions National

Spirit, meaning a willingness to perform duties with responsibilities and to work for freedom, national development and service.

The primary education between the ages of 6 and 11 is compulsory in Korea. There is a provision for three years of lower secondary and three years of upper secondary education till the age of 17 years. Then there is the provision for University education. High schools have been divided into general and vocational so that only book-worms are not produced from institutions of learning.

For those missing normal opportunities of education there is a system of civic schools both at elementary and higher levels. The spread of education has been so rapid that one may call it an educational explosion. In 1945, just after the War there were 165 secondary schools with a mere 83,514 students, and the number of teachers was 3,219 ; the last figures for 1977 show the number of students to be more than 3·5 million and that of teachers over 91 thousand. No wonder the message has gone home deeply into the rural areas also where more educated and more trained generation is giving a new look to agricultural activities.

I visited a couple of Universities in and around Seoul, saw the Campuses and felt happy and inspired with the atmosphere. There are all sorts of facilities for pursuit of education in its various aspects, academic and cultural.

The students have played a prominent part in Korean politics and have been the principal reason for the ouster of President Syngman Rhee. Now that they seem to be a little constrained to freely participate in the politics of destruction they have diverted their energies to more useful and nation-building tasks. Non-formal education under the new community (Saemaul) movement takes them to rural areas as helping hands

to the society and the people there. There are separate Saemaul schools also which have an emphasis on the rural development. They are associated with or rather act as the extension of the vocational schools and provide for three-day programmes during the vacations. These three-day training courses have benefited tens of thousands of people in recent years. There is a system of Student Service Corps which goes to rural areas during the vacations. This is basically of college students but high school students also join it. They work in the areas of farming, environmental improvement and medical care etc.

Korean government has been encouraging students to go abroad, acquire skills and come back to serve the mother country. There are some forty countries where Korean students are pursuing higher courses of learning. The most preferred country for higher and specialised education is the United States, followed by Germany. There were more than 13,000 Korean students in various countries in 1976. In addition the Korean government was running several institutions for learning of Korean language, history and culture in various countries of the world where there are a number of Koreans residing. The largest number of Korean nationals, as well as of Korean origin, live in Japan where the number is 6·5 Lakh. There are more than 9.2 lakh Koreans living all over the world, 2.2 lakh in North America alone. The Korean government has arranged schools for them, 11 schools are in Japan alone. The government lays stress on education and educational pursuits whether in Korea or abroad.

One of the special features of this formal and non-formal education is the system of Saturday schools set up by Koreans in foreign countries. They provide week-end lectures for an hour or two in Korean language, history and culture. Besides, summer schools have

also become popular in Japan and the United States for Korean residents which are generally for high school level students who are taught the Korean language.

There is a well established library chain in Korea whose ancestry dates back to Koryo dynasty (918-1392). The first library was set up in that period and subsequently Yi dynasty also continued the good work, and set up another royal library. The modern style library was founded in 1906 and since then a regular chain of libraries has been established throughout the country. There are three very big libraries in the country, one the Central National Library with an impressive collection of six hundred thousand books. The second is the National Assembly Library set up in Pusan, during the Korean War, which has more than half a million books. There are 108 public libraries, 96 special libraries and 4,100 school and university libraries. The biggest which I saw was the library of Seoul National University boasting of the biggest collection of books—well over one million. There are rural libraries numbering more than 35 thousand serving the small communities. The Korean authorities told me that they still need more and more libraries as the thirst for knowledge and information is unabated.

Education in Korea is on completely modern lines with modern facilities and with the aid of the electronic media. I saw the educational broadcasting and TV set up for the benefit of students. Korean Educational Development Institute's programme of two colour channels for TV transmission is indeed praiseworthy as TV has become the biggest means of spreading education far and wide and most effectively too.

Examinations or examining the knowledge of students is itself very tough and a fairly high standard has been laid down for passing. The Korean authorities told me that generally the passing grade is 60% marks.

For a student anxious to obtain his Bachelor degree he must have had a complete four year's course with an average grade of C—between 70 and 79% marks. For Masters grade you need average B, that is between 80 and 89%. Doctoral candidate has to undergo much more hard work spending seven years in outstanding research after a four year college course and ten years or more of prominent research work after graduating from a junior college. All Doctoral degrees have to be first approved by the Minister of Education before they are finally awarded. Before the case goes to the minister outstanding scholars evaluate the work. It is very tough indeed but then the quality of scholarship is also aimed very high.

The Press In Korea

ONE OF the prominent figures in the field of journalism I met in Korea during my first trip was Mr Kim Bong-gi, the then Chief of *Korea Herald*. He got me interviewed by one of his reporters and entertained me fairly lavishly. I am told that now he has left journalism but the knowledge he gave and interest he created in me for Korean journalism has not diminished, it has increased since then.

My journalist friends of the Korean press whom I first met in the United States and elsewhere are by and large still in the profession. Four of them were with me in the States touring, learning, lecturing, observing and sending despatches to their respective papers. The press in Korea is big business and some of them also own big radio and TV channels. They have big circulation, at least half a dozen of the daily newspapers have a circulation of over half a million copies. In a country of 37 million a circulation of 175 copies per hundred persons is much higher than the UNESCO standard for average newspaper readership.

The newspapers in Korea have played a prominent part in the movement for restoration of popular and just government in the country. It is a debatable point whether the end of 12 year rule of the aged President

Syngman Rhee was brought about by the student uprising or the fierce writings in the Korean Press. Both can take the credit but that only shows the power of the press in Korea which, of and on, has been the victim of restrictions and also has at times voluntarily submitted to restraints. In any case the history of the Korean press has been a saga of dynamic, active and impressive journalism.

Modern Korean newspapers can trace their history to 1883 when Hansong Sunbo published its first issue on the 1st of October. Hansong being the other name for Seoul. It was not a daily paper, was published three times a month. It said its task was to report government news, primarily, but shall also carry domestic and overseas news. One of the interesting policies enunciated was to instruct that every high ranking official, and central and local offices shall be obliged to read it. It also said that staff member's salaries will be paid by the Foreign Ministry and other expenses will be paid by Seoul city. It was printed in Chinese characters. It was claimed to be the 'lamp light of society,' the 'mirror of mankind' and the 'leader of the people.' It set for itself the praiseworthy goal of assisting the weak, admonishing the erring and enlightening Korea. Almost a hundred years back the light that Hansong Sunbo kindled has been burning fairly brightly till today. In its coverage of social events, and also crime, it raised controversy also and became the target of Chinese attacks whom it annoyed by publishing a story of a Chinese soldier shooting down a shopkeeper.

The first Korean newspaper had to face the wrath of a political nature, it was the first record of violent action against the press when the offices of the newspaper were burnt down and the machinery, type and other property destroyed. It was indeed political violence as the paper was thought to be the mouthpiece

of the Reformist Party, as opposed to the conservatives and pro-Chinese.

In 1886 Hansong weekly was started with both Korean Hangul and Chinese characters. It was the first time that Hangul was used for publishing a newspaper. But it was left to the *Independent*, the first modern Korean newspaper, to exclusively use Hangul for its editions. The first issue of the *Independent* was published on April 7, 1896 under the editorship of Jae pil So, an exile back from USA after 12 years. It was a private newspaper and left a deep mark on Korean journalism by its independence, revolutionary record and fearlessness. Even the fact that it used the Korean language exclusively, discarding the Chinese characters, speaks of its independence. It was published three times a week. The real daily newspaper—the same *Independent*—started from 1st July 1898. It was indeed fearless in exposing the shady activities of those placed in high position and thereby incurred their wrath. Jae pil had to go back to United States at the behest of the Korean Foreign Minister who persuaded the American consul general in Seoul to take back the revolutionary who had lived in exile after the unsuccessful revolt of the 1884. Jae pil returned to USA and stayed there till 1945. He died in 1949 at the age of 82. His paper had folded in 1899, because of government action, but during the four short years it did set many standards and achieved many firsts. It was the first modern, independent newspaper and set a new trend of writing in Korean journalism. It was also the first victim of a government action.

Korean Press waged a war on the Japanese also and played a prominent part in the struggle for liberation and democracy. Japan suppressed the Korean press ruthlessly along with the freedom movement. Under the pretext of security and military reasons it enforced

consorship. This was before Japan had annexed Korea; it had a large number of troops and so could do whatever it wanted during the Russo-Japanese War. It was suppression all the way but newspapers still resisted in their own ways. The history of fearless Korean Press is as fascinating as it is thrilling and like the pre-independence newspapers in India the Korean Press was in the vanguard of the freedom struggle.

The present day fiercely independent newspaper *Dong-A Ilbo* started publication in 1920 when the Japanese relaxed their hold in the wake of worldwide resentment against the oppression they let loose on the Korean people in 1919. *Dong-A* was the only nationalist newspaper and followed a policy of advocating freedom and progress, and of course democracy. Of the three papers allowed to publish at that time, in 1920, only two *Dong-A* and *Choson*, are still coming out, the other, *Sisa Shinmun* is no more.

According to the government records there was a prototype of a newspaper way back in 1577. That was the first of the kind but now the modern Korean Press can boast of some three dozen dailies, including three dailies exclusively for children. Seven major daily newspapers have circulation of half a million copies each, the biggest being the independent national daily *Dong-A Ilbo*.

Besides the newspapers Korea has a wide network of radio and TV. Broadcasting began in 1927 and television in 1961. In the beginning they were all owned, controlled and managed by the government but today all the radio and TV stations are in private hands, the only exception is Korea Broadcasting System which is a public corporation.

The spread of radio broadcasting made a significant impact on the people, educating, entertaining and enlightening them. Today there is one radio set for

every three persons in Korea. The total number of TV sets is five-and-a half million.

Korea still has mostly black and white TV though it produces colour TV itself. They are mainly for export.

My friend Kim Do Yon and those of KBS told me of a wide variety of programmes, intelligently handled and broadcast/telecast by the stations in Korea. KBS has 20 of them besides 44 relay stations. There is severe competition and therefore the programmes are of a very high order in entertainment, education and information.

Korean Culture

ELSEWHERE I have mentioned many places and facets of culture of the Land Of The Morning Calm or the Hermit Kingdom that is Korea. Culture in the oriental sense does not limit itself to music and dance but, is very much beyond a manifestation on the stage. Korea has a long history and its archaeological remains, ancient relics and a tradition of religion, literature and the arts have made it very rich. It is also said that Korea is a 'museum without walls.'

Sandwiched between two powerful neighbours, China and Japan, Korea could have been swept off its feet by any one of them. On the contrary Korea with its own individualistic and creative instinct drew upon the outside achievement and Koreanized it. With polishing, refining and adding to it the Koreans passed it on to Japan and China. Korea never copied the Chinese or the Japanese arts and culture blindly. Critics have differentiated between arts of the three countries. They say the Chinese art appears to be massive and ornate, the Japanese dainty and simple and the Korean spontaneous, unpolished and exuding rude strength. Whatever it is, it has its very own attractive points and the Koreans are proud of them.

It was after the setting up of the Republic that proper

care was taken to preserve the art treasure, spread the culture of Korea, refine and popularise it. The influx of tourists also gave a filip to the movement of restoration of cultural and historical centres, to refine and perfect the performing arts and to present them to the outside world more frequently and more systematically. These include art objects, handicrafts, music, dance, and drama. A scheme of maintaining the National Treasure was formulated and all the ancient art objects collected, classified and given protection. The National Treasure now numbers 145. The Ministry of Culture and Information has taken steps to preserve the cultural heritage of Korea and to propagate the sense of national identity based on past greatness, present hard work and future hopes.

Korean culture is heavily dependent on Buddhist influence and religion. Wonderful Buddha images in different metals and alloys majestically survey the scene at various places throughout Korea. There are beautiful stone lanterns decorating the edifices and graceful pagodas telling the stories of master carvers' skill and patience.

Silla dynasty had given much for the spread of religion, culture and literature. Excavations have brought to light several rich collections of art treasures. 2,000 year old royal tombs have come up in these excavations in the old capital city of Kyong-Ju. It includes paintings, pottery and jewellery. The Koryo dynasty was also a patron of fine arts and several significant discoveries of masterly craftsmanship have found their way to national museum. Yi dynasty also could boast of its encouragement for porcelain ceramics, some of them are also found in Korean places of the arts.

Some paintings dating back to the advent of Christian era have also been found, all in comparatively good shape. Some of the other works of master painters

have perished by fire, old age or because of wars. Some of them were on tree barks, leaves, etc. Literature in Korea had two distinctive aspects or facets ; one was moulded on the Chinese pattern, translated or simply copied, the other based on simply local themes in the local language. Society and its various facets were the most popular subjects and themes for folk tales, novels and poetry. By and large poetry was reserved for expressing finer and subtler feelings of love, nostalgia, separation and other moving ideas. In the folk tales there is a strong criticism of the activities of the monks and equally satirical expression about the aristocracy.

Music and dance have been for ages the essential traits of Korean character. Today in Korea you have music from the old tradition of the courts as well as the more earthy and folkish one of the farmer and common man. In Korea western classical music and dance forms are also accepted and presented with equal facility. Some of their music and dance ensembles have become world famous, like the Little Angels and the ladies group which performed at the White House, at the United Nations and at the Munich Olympic Games in 1972.

Korea is known in the world as a fast growing country with industrial and trade accomplishment. But it is also known to outsiders as a country of no mean cultural achievement. Fast growing industrial output, worldwide economic activity and trading competition tend to overshadow or ignore the cultural aspects but the Koreans, proud of their heritage and past accomplishment, have given due attention to the cultural wealth of the country and its preservation.

Korea is rich in folk music. During the struggle against the Japan many stories and poems were written to arouse a sense of patriotism of the Koreans. One typical, poignant folk tale concerns a Korean girl who lured a Japanese General to the river and sacrificed

her life to drown the representative of foreign imperialism. Her noble death is commemorated and floral tributes paid to her by other beauties of the area at her grave. The citizens have erected a shrine in her memory and pray for her fragrant soul.

Korean literature in fact attempts to reconcile reality with ideals and it is based entirely on Korean thought and tradition. Literary activities during the three Kingdoms did flourish to an extent but when the series of wars engulfed Korea and it fell under the Japanese in modern times not much writing was done. The Japanese were not in favour of an independent Korean identity in literature and whatever was written then was not allowed to spread widely.

After the liberation there was the unfortunate division of the country and the terrible war which also did not allow much scope for literary flowers to bloom. One could argue that the division and the War could be the ideal setting for a literary movement of protest. Also Korean literature was subjected to ideological rivalries and cold war tension. It did produce topical writing but not a vast treasury of literature depicting life and ideas in its different aspects. The literature produced during the last two decades or so was overwhelmed by nationalistic political considerations and drifted away from the genuine and national literature of lasting impact. Superficially it is, no doubt of a nationalist character.

There was neo-romanticism but it was soon overshadowed by the stark naked realities of the situation. Even now the economic progress and the fast pace of industrialisation, increasing impact and contact with the west, specially the Americans, have influenced the literary trend also. These are the challenges any literature has to face and the Korean writers are also doing the same.

In the 50s and the 60s they had produced literature mostly with the War in the background. There were humanistic themes as several ace writers had themselves suffered the consequences of the War. Many had been soldiers, wounded or victims of the exodus. Many became refugees and their relations, friends and others had also suffered making them bitter against the War, against domination and against Communism. It was humanistic, protesting and also to an extent pessimistic. Sex had also its share in post-War literature. In the opinion of keen students of Korean literature one common undercurrent could be visible in post-War literature, obviously the writers were all against the established society and wrote severely criticising the then existing society.

Music and dance of Korea have become more famous with several world famous ensembles going round the world. There are traditional Korean instruments and the strains of court music but with a vigorous impact of western ideas and trends there have been innovations and welcome ones at that. Apart from the traditional music there are bands of popular music and also based on popular folk music. Pop music tends to lead the youth astray and there has been an outcry against it in several countries. It is often looked down upon by traditional societies. Realising the influence of such a trend the Korean government has attempted to guide pop music into useful, healthy channels to keep the Korean youth away from drugs, permissiveness and anti-social activities.

Korean literature will surely flourish now that the economic miracles are taking place. I am reminded of an old Chinese saying : 'an empty stomach is not conducive to moral rectitude'. There is a Hindi saying equally applicable : 'A hungry stomach will not think of

worshipping.' It can apply to production of literature also even though the oriental tradition of frugality and self-abnegation is very much there. Now that the economic condition of the general public is much better it is likely that the Korean genius will again give its best in pursuit of higher goals in literature, and awaken the latent talent for fine works of literary value.

About dances the Korean authorities accept the fact—and are not apologetic about it—that some of the more prominent Buddhist dances which originated in India were introduced to Korea via China some 1,700 years ago. Even today some four kinds are still surviving. There were court dances also about which they say there are fifty different ones. Besides there are the folk dances so popular everywhere, where singing and dancing are integrated. Modern dance is also an in-thing—they were first introduced in Korea in the late twenties by the Japanese. Now five Universities offer courses in dancing and there are over 150 students graduating in dances from these centres.

Korean dance is a part of the daily life of the common people. The Korean farmer is hardworking as well as a lover of music and dance—he simply wants to give expression to his moods of joy and of sorrow—basically like any other traditional farmer in any other country.

Korean children are being inducted into music and dancing from an early age. Many of them show a special aptitude for perfection. They are given all encouragement. I will write on the children's ensemble separately.

Poetry has in a way escaped the impact of the realities of the situation to a certain extent. There has been experimentation in poetry. All this show a new,

varied and strong trend to create something. There have been a spate of good literary journals in Korea. They are growing and have given an opportunity to writers. The Universities have also contributed their share in this pursuit of literature; their literary societies and departments have encouraged many to write and publicise their works. There has recently been a tendency to discard the pessimism of the immediate past, post-War period and sing the praises of the new, vibrant society, the new industrial giant emerging on the world map. Not all literature is nationalistic but there is a vast scope for other experimentation and the young and also the old writers are taking full advantage of it.

Korean poetry is a thing of beauty. It is often said that an industrialised society cannot afford the time and leisure for writing poetry. It may or may not be true ; there could be arguments for and against it. But in Korea one does find poetry written in ancient times, time when wars and invasions were also there in plenty. A country sandwiched between Japan and China could not afford a period of peace but inspite of that poetry was written and enjoyed. Korean poetry is rich and beautiful like its landscape.

One of the Korean classics is Haedong Kayo meaning Korean Verses. It is an anthology of classical poetry compiled by the celebrated Korean poet of the 18th century Kim Su-jang. He lived 1690—1770 and wrote extensively. His collection has more than five hundred verses of the Sijo style, a popular verse form. Sijo poems are short, short poems, of three lines or three sentences but are effective, imaginative and lyrical. According to knowledgeable critics and serious students of Sijo and Korean poetry the form has also three distinct characteristics namely, short verse, longer verse and long prose poem. One of the short verses of Kim's shows his purity of mind and his

independence. Here is an example :

You love blue Cloud
(You are ambitious),
I Love white cloud
(Purity of mind),
You love wealth,
I love peaceful poverty.
You may laugh at me,
I do not care.

This is typical riental Ooutlook !

Sijo has 45 syllables. It has had many revivals but has influenced modern poetry, both in form and technique.

Another of the soft, sweet and short poems I could not resist the temptation of reproducing is :

When you leave, weary of me,
I will quietly let you go.
Tread softly, step by step,
Upon the flowers as you go.
When you leave, weary of me,
I will bite my lip
To stop my tears.

Modern Korean poetry has not lost the ancient softness and beauty, not at all. Poetry normally has love as its chief inspiration ; separation is also connected with love. Patriotic poetry is not always written, there must be a provocation for it. Modern Korean poetry has this tender feeling :

Kim Nam-jo in *The Love Scripts* :

Instead of deserting,

Let me be the deserted,
If I am to be in love,
Let me be the first to love.
and
If heart could answer heart,
If soul could echo soul,
For the thought alone I whimper
For I am a starved silly child.

Kim Dong-when has this to say :

We live within the same wall,
But they let me see you in my dream only.
That's one way only,
Even that tonight only.

In Korea on both the occasions, somehow, there was no time for me to listen to Korean poetry, and perhaps recite some of mine. May be the language barrier was there but if ever I get another opportunity to make a trip to Korea I am certainly going to make one evening of Korean poetry. Since I don't drink I wish to drown myself in the beauty of poetry, the mysticism of the Oriental thought and the charm of the language. Then only my wish to know more about Korean poetry and my desire and effort to present glimpses of world poetry' to my readers will be fulfilled.

There is a similarity between India and Korea in their thought processes and in their idioms and proverbs. Idioms and proverbs are a sure way to know the richness of the language and the wisdom of the people. Some proverbs are really delightful and I quote (through the English translation of course) :

"Although the three room thatched house is all burnt, the destruction of bedbugs is a delight."
(When there is hatred in your heart you find pleasure

in destruction of the one you hate even at a much bigger cost).

Here is another :

"The soyabeans in the rice of another person look much bigger." (To a greedy person everything that belongs to the other looks much more attractive).

For upstarts there is a fitting proverb in Korea :

"When a daughter-in-law becomes a mother-in-law she assumes even more the air of a mother-in-law."

Mother-in-law in any society is usually hated and abhored. Same is the fate of the Korean mother-in-law. But there are times when the husband's mother is also remembered. A proverb has this to say :

"Even a dead mother-in-law is brought to mind when pounding rice. (When the daughter-in-law has to do the job alone only then she remembers her mother-in-law who used to give her a helping hand).

For a foolish, suicidal case the wise in Korea have this to say :

"Carry gun-powder on one's back and go into a fire."

Another quite sharp and short is :

"No sleep, no dreams."

It certainly makes an interesting reading if you go deep into the Korean language, tradition and literature. Alas, I have time only to scratch the surface.

Koreans are as traditional as Indian society and in many ways similar. I have pointed out some points of similarity but there are some others which I wish to add. One is the traditional concept of joint family. In India, as in Korea, in modern, industrialised society it has become difficult to keep up the joint home of all those from the father's side. In villages and some other semi-urban areas, and sometimes in the cities also, wherever possible and practical, the Koreans tend to live together just like the Indians. It is always better to have a patriarch to advise the family and younger people, to give strength to the family. There are certainly many advantages in a joint family though these days we see disintegration of the joint family system.

In India also most of the enlightened and reformed classes do not marry among close relations, between the same division of the sub-castes. In Korea also there is the tradition of not marrying in the same clan. It is said that this custom has its biological advantages also as marriage in the same closely related group at times result in deformities, both physical and mental. The Koreans came to know of this fact quite early in their history and have tried to preserve this tradition in their society.

Many in India, including the politicians, are under the spell of astrologers, priests, God-men and the like. There is naming ceremony in India and the proposed name is often suggested by the priest or the astrologer. It should have a meaning, or should be after the Gods. In Korea also many of the old fashioned go to the philosopher or the Name Doctor to get a suitable name, to find out if the name already selected would have good fortune and if possible to 'repair' a name already given. This may sound ridiculous but there it is. After all it is an Oriental country!

The Little Angels

ROYALTY, STATESMEN and commoners all have applauded the famous Little Angels troupe of the Republic of Korea with the same vigour and enthusiasm. The 44 member children's music-dance group has given performances for the Queen of England, and the discerning audience at the Kennedy Centre for Performing Arts in New York. The same group has also toured India and gave scintillating performance, it was a unique occasion for me and my family to witness and all agreed that we had never seen such a masterly performance. The Korean singing and dancing dolls then were on a special world tour, in 1974 and, I understand, they go all over the world most frequently.

The Little Angels group is surely the best of the Korean folk music and dance ensemble of Children. The children in the group are from 7 to 14 years of age. They are young in age but absolutely mature in their performance. None could believe that the performance they put up is at par with the best professional groups in the world.

These wonderful angels were formed into one group in 1962. It is indeed the most unusual dance group in the world. Almost 18 years back Mr Bo Hi Pak, a

Colonel in the Korean Army extended an invitation to the country's foremost ballerina and choreographer Miss Soon Shim Shin to join him in an attempt to organise and produce a children's world class folk ballet which will portray the colour and rhythm and beauty and splendour of Korea. The traditional Korean music and dance, rich in itself could become richer by the tender touch of these angels.

The scheme worked. They announced a nationwide contest and gifted children were selected for their brilliant performance in dancing. Thirty of the most talented were then selected who were between seven and fifteen. Already they were very good at dancing but the organisers had set still higher standards of perfection. They were organised into a group which received intensive training for three years and only then they appeared before the people in 1965 for their first performance. The debut was astonishingly successful and since then they have not looked back.

Between 1965 and 1974 they had already toured 35 countries on eight different world tours. The Little Angels had been on the stage of Japan, Mexico Olympics in 1968 and in White House twice before President Eisenhower and President Nixon. They have been at the UN for UNICEF benefit. The Angels performed before Queen Elizabeth of England in 1971, it was the first Asian troupe ever to be invited for a Royal Command performance. It was a record breaking performance and prompted even the Queen to break protocol and receive the group in a special reception after the show. So overwhelmed was the Queen that she congratulated the performers personally and said : 'Now I realise how beautiful Korea must be with its age old cultural heritage.' At that function the youngest member of the troupe was 8 year old Miss Lee Yong-mi who presented the Queen with a typical

Korean doll. The Queen was all praise for the doll and the gesture and remarked : 'I will keep it in my sitting room as a loving remembrance of your performance here tonight.' What more praise one could expect from a reigning Queen who is a keen lover of the arts. The fact, however, remains that the praise was well deserved.

The Little Angels group has a wide variety of items in their repertoire. From the first rhythmic beat of the Hourglass Drum dance (*Jang-go Chum*) to the fast whirl of the colourful costumes in the Farm Dance (*Nong Oak*) the agile, smiling and charming young ladies of Korea enliven the hall and keep the audience spellbound. They have successfully portrayed their country's culture and represented Korea as remarkable ambassadors of goodwill.

The Angels performed at the time of the Mexico Olympic games in 1968 at the International Fine Arts Festival. The oft-repeated remark then was : 'The Little Angels wove a spell of Oriental magic which held the audience spellbound. It was no exaggeration and one who has seen the Angels can testify to its veracity.'

The Little Angels have given over a thousand performances in over fifty countries all over the globe. They have also done over five hundred TV performances. No wonder a newspaper of *New York Times*, stature wrote about their performance : 'There are few other folk companies that could match the flawless adult professionalism of the Little Angels.'

The success of the troupe cannot be traced to one factor. The intricacy of their dance numbers, the technical perfection of the entire show, the colourful costumes and the smiles on their lips while performing, and above all the beauty of their movements have

made them really big little charmers. No wonder they have been at the zenith of popularity, ever since they made their debut way back in 1965.

Every year the seniors go out and some of them join the senior group of dancers in the Hankuk (Korean) Folk Arts Group—yet another band of exquisitely charming and talented performers.

A Paradise For Tourists

YOU MAY say about any country that it is a paradise for tourists but there are countries which really are paradise. In natural beauty, in man-made places, in its cultural aspects, in food and shopping, and above all, in warm hospitality Korea is one of the best countries a tourist can think of. I am positive on it.

It was at PATA '78 in New Delhi also that the Republic of Korea projected itself before the gathering of travel writers, travel agents and others interested in travel business. What a wonderful and magnificent projection it was! There was a Korea Night. There was a programme of scintillating dances. There were dolls and badges. The whole programme captivated the people who could get invitations to it and to the others who heard and read about it. The publicity for PATA '79 in Korea was so good that even my younger daughter kept on asking me for months afterwards when we would be going to Seoul. She used to say: 'Papa, we have to go to PATA '79 in Seoul'. Such was the impact of travel publicity of Korean tourism.

It is not that Korea only did publicity on a large scale. Korea let the others know that its capital city, Seoul, was fully prepared to meet and greet the world tourists coming to it next year. Seoul staged

PATA '79 and from all reports that I got I can safely say that it was the grandest Pacific Area Travel Association meet so far. I regret I have missed it. Such is the lure of Korea! Such is the charm of Korea!

Last year there were a million tourists in Korea and the earnings were well over \$260 million. The 1981 figures are expected to be real fabulous: two million visitors and one billion dollars earnings. The goodwill earned will not be and cannot be measured at all.

As a person who has been to Korea twice, both in summer and in winter, I can say without the least hesitation that a place like Korea could attract visitors in any season. That Korea has been increasing its intake of foreign tourists every year between 12 and 34·4 per cent is a significant fact. Tourism is a flourishing industry in Korea and the future projections made during PATA '79 were of the order of 2·6 million for 1983 and onward. There was a big jump during 1967-71 when the previous record of 28·1% was broken with a 34·4% increase. In 1972-76 period this increase was maintained.

To coincide with PATA '79 and to facilitate the visitors several first class hotels were built in and around Seoul and elsewhere in the country. A fine 38 storey 1,000 room Hotel Lotte was one of the several attractive hotels. Lotte representatives were there in PATA '78 in Delhi and I had met them and was impressed by what they told me, what they showed me. Another hotel Shilla with 672 rooms is also proving popular. The Land of The Morning Calm is definitely a roaring success where tourism is concerned.

Korea has developed many attractive places for the foreign tourists like its ancient capital Kyong-ju and the picturesque island of Cheju-do. Korea has already built a capacity of 17,000 hotel rooms and it is further being enlarged to 22,000 before the end of the year.

According to a market study conducted by a non-Korean foreign group of experts Korea can expect its tourism to grow at an annual rate of around 20% for the next ten years at least. It is estimated that by 1983 Korea will have beaten Japan as the big tourist place, next only to Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand. Now Japan and Taiwan are ahead of Korea, which in any case is the sixth largest Far East destination for tourism.

International Air Travel Association has its own rules and regulations and till recently the round-the-world air fare schedule did not include Korea but now it has been able to forcefully convince them to gain a prestigious point. Now you can stopover in Korea on a round-the-world fare without spending anything as extra fare.

To recall that in 1967 Korea had only 84,216 foreign tourists is asking someone to believe a ghost story; indeed the visitors' number increased ten times in nine years only and is growing further. The other satisfying aspect of the whole thing is that tourism has not spoilt Korea's scenic beauty and its cultural heritage. On the contrary it has encouraged its traditional living, its songs and dances have been perfected and polished.

Korea has encouraged foreign travellers by relaxing the visa formalities in a big way. You no longer need a visa for a stay of upto 120 hours if you have a confirmed onward booking. For a longer stay just show the current passport and a health certificate and you will get a visa. There are about two hundred flights a week to and from Seoul besides ferry service to and from Japan. Korean Airlines is one of the most fascinating ones in the world though it has so far not been operating *via* India. It is hoped that KAL will soon call at Indian airports and Air India will reciprocate with a stop at Seoul's giant and beautiful Kimpo airport.

What's In A Name

I HAVE mentioned elsewhere about the story of a man who threw four stones in a busy market place; three hit people named Kim and the fourth one hit a Lee. There are indeed so many Kims in Korea; the Lees occupy the second place. Among my friends there are several Kims—more the merrier.

There are Sharmas and Jains and Guptas in India by the tonnes. Similarly there are Kims and Lees. It's like the Smiths in England. Nothing to be ashamed of!

Korean names are usually not tongue-twisters like the Greek—the Polish are probably a close second. There is of course a custom with Korean names but if you know that, it will not pose a problem. In Korea the family name or the surname is written first. Like Kim Sang-jin, Kim is the family name. According to the western custom, and widely prevalent in India also, the Koreans have also started writing their family names after their first and middle names. So my friend Kim Sang-jin will write it as Sang-jin Kim.

Though the celebrated English writer Shakespeare said long ago, 'What's there in a name' I think there is much more in a name than meets the eye. Sometimes if you are not familiar with names and their usage you may embarrass someone or you will be embarrassed.

yourself. People are usually proud of their names and in Korea women are prouder than the men, I suppose. Women do not change their maiden names after their marriage. They do not affix their husband's family name with their own, usually. So one may find the scandalous spectacle of one Mr Kim staying in a hotel room with a lady named Mrs Lee—who may of course be his legally wedded wife.

I was told that women in Korea are much more awakened, liberated, emancipated than their counterparts in Japan. That may sound a little strange to one who does not know even a little about Korea. I was told about it in the United States by my Korean friend, Im. He went on to explain it with the help of an illustration. He drew four circles—two sets. One set represented the Koreans—man and woman—and the other the Japanese. In his Korean set the circles were closer than the Japanese two who had a wider gap. The gap, he said, is narrower in Korea as the man is no longer regarded as the dominant partner. The gap is there but it has narrowed down considerably during the last two decades or so, asserted Im. The circles were the Im way of explaining but it worked and I understood. In Korea wherever I went and saw I got the impression that women are certainly much better placed than their counterparts in many countries. There are women working everywhere, in various fields in Korea, competing with men and outsmarting them. The new transformation—though the lib movement as such was not really visible—has been the result of participation in independence movement and education of Korean women. Under the old society women were not given their due place and identity. They were only so-and-so's daughter, mother or wife.

It is said that Koreans keep a very methodical record of their ancestry. The family tree is kept and could tell

about one's forefathers for a couple of hundred years at least. Take the family name Kim, there are at least five hundred clans of Kims and it is very difficult to bypass a Kim.

The feminine names, sometimes, are more beautiful like the 'Spring Orchard', 'Fragrance of Crysanthemum' and 'Full Moon'. Traditional Korean society wanted decorative names for their daughters and that meant that women are decorations. But who wants someone who is not even a piece of decoration ?

Taekwon-do: For Self Defence

FROM TIMES immemorial man has tried to defend himself without outside help. It is a lesson in self reliance and is as old as human history itself. No wonder every society and every nation tries to adopt, practice and perfect the art of self defence, be it on a large scale with sophisticated armaments or with simple methods of using his own hands and feet, and of course his brain.

In India also since thousands of years *Akharas* (the gymnasium) have been in vogue where the young boys practised the art of wrestling, gymnastics, acrobatics and so on. During the Ramlila celebrations several moving gymsnasiums are one of the attractions of the religious processions. Thanks to the new found fear of 'communalism' this practice is slowly being discouraged. If people gather at one place in the morning or in the evening for an hour of sports, drills, exercises, and a little bit of patriotic discussion, it is called '*Shakha*'—RSS gathering. No wonder this label has made some people sceptical. The result: young people of the so-called elite classes are no longer interested in outdoor exercises, most of them are diverted toward cinema or restaurants or discos.

I am happy that such a thing has not happened to

Koreans in general. In Korea they take pride in learning the art of self defence without any kind of inhibition.

Taekwon-do has been developed in Korea for about 2,000 years now as an art of self defence. It has now become a National Sport in Korea and is spreading fast in some of the foreign countries also. There are some 1,000 Korean instructors teaching this very useful art in over 80 countries. In Korea alone there are 1·5 million members of Taekwon-do associations. A cousin of Kungfu and Karate Taekwon-do is both and much more.

There is a world championship in Taekwon-do and the fourth of its kind was staged in West Germany this year. There have been three earlier, two (1973 and 1975) in Korea where all the eight divisions were captured by the Koreans—may be because they had the monopoly for this sport. Later in the 1977 championship held in Chicago the Koreans had to be content with seven out of eight.

Taekwon-do is much older to Karate having been introduced in Korea by an envoy to Okinawa (Japan) during the Yi dynasty (1392-1910). Taekwon-do was supposed to be a martial art of self defence. later it became popular as a sport.

Taekwon-do or Taekwondo does not have any weapons or any other equipment to fight out the opponent. Here the main feature is to use your hands and feet. In the past two thousand years and more, but specially during the last two decades, Taekwon-do has become a worldwide sport and has got the Presidential appreciation also. President Park awarded a scroll, written by him with the brush, which proclaims 'A National Sport—Taekwondo.'

When I saw the demonstration by boys and girls I was reminded of the ancient Indian custom of *Ashrama* and the reverence toward your *Guru*, the

instructor. Before commencement of the demonstration the whole group bows before the instructor and of course in reply the instructor also bows. When the demonstration is over they again exchange bows. I asked about it and was told that the Taekwon-do spirit is that it begin and end with civility.

I was impressed!

The sport has a unique feature that you attack or defend or counter attack from any direction, front, rear, right, left and use hands, fists, elbows, knees and feet. You jump and you twist and whirl and keep your opponent guessing all the time. His surprise is your victory and you land your hits directly at him. Mental discipline, stance, movements, punches, kicks and jumps are all part of a calculated and swift breathtaking game.

Taekwon-do improves health, balance and agility, self confidence and perseverance and also the ability to withstand assault. It has been incorporated in the education curricula of all Korean primary and high schools and colleges. It is also a major part of the training for the military and one of the major items of any athletic meet. There are different grades of training and one can become a white, yellow, blue, red or red/black belt-holder in due course. The popularity of the sport can be gauged by the fact that there are now some ten million students and followers of Taekwon-do in eighty countries of the world. It's a very systematic game with rules and elaborate pattern of training and examinations.

Korea is the home and headquarters of Taekwon-do and naturally they have built a home for it in Seoul called Kukkiwon. It was dedicated in 1972, a few months after I visited Korea. Not that I had anything to do with it but I am sure my appreciation and good wishes for this very interesting, useful and thrilling sport and the art of self defence were there and will

always be with them. I am happy to note that India also subsequently became a member of the World Taekwon-do Federation. When I was returning from the Taekwon-do demonstration I had wondered if India too with its background for such exercises for self defence will adopt and encourage this sport also and I am happy to note that a few years later India did join the fraternity of Taekwon-do followers. I can now only say : 'may their tribe increase.'

My guide Kim was also a black belt-holder-instructor in the sport though he looked quite thin and lean ; but for an exponent of the art one does not have to be fatty, it is a disqualification. I had only expressed my passing wish to explore the possibility to see a demonstration and Kim arranged it in a jiffy, as they say. On one afternoon he took me to two places, one where I saw a demonstration by boys and the other by girls. I was thrilled to see many six year olds also with firmness in their eyes and determination in their action and what an exciting demonstration they gave ! They use their hands, fists and feet to maximum advantage to fell their opponent.

The bigger boys and girls gave a fantastic display of speed, power and agility. It was delightful and impressive. Sport like these make you realise the oft-quoted saying of Englishmen : 'the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playgrounds of Eaton and Harrow.'

Humour: The Best Tonic

HUMOUR IS not a monopoly of any person or any nation. The Koreans, so often subjected to foreign invasions and now new threats of invasion by the other half, do not seem to have much time for humour, but that's not correct. No society can remain alive without humour. The Koreans also have a sense of humour inspite of the hard mountainous terrain and unkind cold weather. Theirs is a kind of humour which is down to earth, simple, and unsophisticated but very effective and certainly evokes laughter.

There are stories and stories of humour which gain currency and live for generations. There are some permanent jokes about certain persons and classes of persons which enliven the lives of hardworking people when they relax. Korean society and literature are full of such jokes, anecdotes and stories. Some of them are similar to ones we have in India, perhaps because of the same agrarian background.

Funny stories of Korea include the one about the tiger skin. It is said that the Korean will always say that the tiger's skin is easy to get, a lot easier than if you wanted the whole tiger. Bewildered you will ask how, and our friend, the story-teller will tell you the way. He says : find a sleeping tiger, tie a rope to his tail and secure it tightly to a tree or a big boulder. Then wake up the tiger by making an x like cut on his

nose with a knife. Now watch the fun and you have the tiger skin. The tiger, when awakened in this fashion, will be startled and run away fast through the cut leaving the skin tied to the tree or the rock. You can have the beautiful tiger skin with my compliments.

This reminds me of the funny Indian story which my wife will swear to be true. Says she: the easiest way to catch a crane is to go to him and place a burning candle on his head. When the wax melts and comes down his eyebrows into the eyes he will be blinded. Then you can catch him at will. How easy indeed?

Koreans are simple people and they laugh at these crude and folkish jokes and funny stories. They constitute the large majority of people all over the world. They have to amuse themselves and coin new, funny stories and jokes. They laugh loudest. An authority on Korean society has said that the Koreans laugh more frequently and loudly than audiences in say, England. Same is true of Indian, average Indian audience; ask my wife and hear her roars.

There are certain stories in Korea which are similar to the ones in the ancient Indian classics like *Panchatantra*. One such Korean story is about three thieves who rob a rich merchant. After the job they plan to celebrate but two of the three conspire to kill the third to have a larger share of the loot. One of the remaining two prepares a bottle of poisoned wine but before he can offer it to his friend the other man kills him with a dagger to get the whole share himself. After killing the second one the last thief settles down to celebrate the event by drinking from the bottle of wine which he did not know was poisoned. The result is he also falls dead. This funny story with a moral is quite popular on Korean TV also.

In Delhi there are vast audiences kept roaring with laughter at the theatres where they stage Punjabi plays

with double meaning. Same happens in Korea. One of the well known poets also adopted this technique to convey his reaction to his host who treated him badly.

Another funny Korean story also is similar to the old Sanskrit one and subsequently also found in Tales From Decameron. This one from a popular entertainment series is about two jealous wives. It is like this :

'A man kept a mistress, and his wife, as usual, started a quarrel on the issue as she was, naturally, jealous of the other woman. This really disturbed the husband who was determined to see that peace prevails in the house.

Said he to his wife: you drive me mad. I would rather go on a fast and die and see no more of this everyday trouble.

So saying he locked himself in his room and went on without food for several days. At last the poor lady surrendered and apologised : 'Please open the door, I will never again feel jealous of your friend. Please open the door and have your dinner.'

The husband accepted a written apology and pledge and then enjoyed a nicely cooked dinner. Since then he did not have any trouble from his wife.

His friend also had a mistress and was also victim of his wife's jealousy. He consulted his friend and was told the story. This man also locked himself up without food for days till he felt miserable and no longer able to continue. His trouble aggravated because his wife cooked tasty dishes in the nearest room and ate them with tempting flavour entering the man's locked room all the time. At last he begged of his wife and promised never to have anything to do with his mistress. In turn this wife got a written apology and pledge from him to leave his mistress.

The two friends met again and the first one heard the story of how his friend had to surrender and the fast-unto-death threat did not work. The first man revealed

his secret. Said he : 'Who can live for days together without food ? I had hidden a sack of nuts under my sleeves and merrily went on munching them til my wife apologised.'

The whole audience will certainly roar with laughter.

This is simple down-to-earth humour Koreans indulge in.

Korean humour serves the purpose of amusing the audience and giving relief to the society from everyday drudgery. No doubt modern conveniences have relieved the tedium of work to a certain extent but the mental fatigue can be relieved, without much expense and in more innocent fashion, by these humour stories which abound in Korea.

The jokes and funny stories are told and re-told, are read and re-read and written and re-written all over Korea to the delight of everybody. They are taken from everyday life and have an aura of truth behind them. It seems the Koreans have an abiding faith in what G.B. Shaw, the celebrated and eccentric Irish/English litterateur said : My way of joking is to tell the truth, it's the funniest joke in the world.

The only occasion when jokes can be a serious matter in Korea is when the cartoonists and writers come down upon the government and the National Assembly heavily. Sometimes when it is a little more caustic it is not liked by the authorities. It is still not a perfectly free world to tolerate humour and at times humour is censored. It happened in India during the Emergency when even innocent humour was strictly censored. It probably cannot happen in USA. One of the top humourists of the US said on two occasions : When the Congress is in session I never lack material for my humour column. His second, of the same variety, was : With Congress every time they make a joke it's a law; and every time they make a law it's a joke.

It's no joke to try and corner humour !

Religion : Plenty Of Them

FROM ANIMISM, the worship of nature, to modern paganism and non-religion one could find everything in Korea. Basically respect for genuine religion and religious learning has been there in Korea since ages. Korea indeed is the melting pot of several world religions and for thousands of years.

The oldest and still the most popular religion in Korea is Buddhism. It is the widely practised, formally organised, religion in the country. Buddhism was introduced in Korea around 372 A.D. by Indian and Chinese monks. Elsewhere I have mentioned Marananda who went to Korea to preach Buddhism. The Koreans accepted the Mahayana, or the Great Vehicle, Buddhism. It was made state cult by the Silla Kingdom after some initial hesitation and opposition including martyrdom of a saint. Korean culture benefited by the spread of this religion which preached Ahimsa or non-violence and love of fellow beings.

With Silla dynasty giving way in the tenth century to Koryo dynasty Buddhism became stronger as some of the leading monks started taking part in politics and establishing their hold over the rulers. The large monasteries formed their own armies which may sound strange for a religion professing non-violence and com-

passion. But with their teachings of love and Ahimsa they also tended to weaken the militancy among the people and rightly were blamed for making the country so week that the Mongol invaders were tempted to attack it.

This period of strife and weakness saw another remarkable feat. The Mongols did win a victory but the Buddhists performed something which has now become national treasure. They feared the capture of their holy scriptures and so had them—the whole lot of them—engraved on 80,000 wooden printing blocks. It was done to seek the heavenly protection. The heavens did not block the Mongols but have protected the wooden blocks till today. This was Tripitaka Koreana, as it is sometimes called. The job took sixteen years to complete and is considered most authentic and outstanding compilation of the history of the world. Buddhist sects are many and together they have the largest number of followers. It is estimated that the total number of Buddhists in Korea is over 12 million.

After Buddhism lost its prestige because of the invasion by and domination of the Mongols and also because of the corrupt priests, Confucianism of real Chinese variety prospered. The Yi dynasty which replaced the Koryo took to Confucianism for various political reasons also. Confucianism also had a political and administrative philosophy and soon the religion spread, according to the philosophy of Chu Hsi and his political ideas. Confucianism had also entered Korea around the fourth century but was kept in the background because of lack of state patronage. Now in the changed circumstances Confucianism raised its head and soon became more prevalent. This particular form of religion is basically not religion in the spiritual sense as there is no supernatural aspect in it. It is more a philosophy, a personal code of conduct and an ethical

system. Korean adherents became more keen to adopt and practise Confucianism than their Chinese counterparts and were regarded more superior and virtuous people. It also became synonymous with education and the emphasis the Koreans are still giving to education can trace its origin to Confucianism.

Since it is a way of life the influence of Confucianism is difficult to measure in terms of numbers of its followers but rough estimates made some years back gave a figure of 4·4 million adherents.

More recent is the Christian religion having been introduced in Korea in the 17th century. It came, strangely, from China in the form of books by Catholic missionaries. Along with the religion came other works of western learning which got its followers in the next century. The first Christian missionary went to Korea only in the last few years of the 18th century. That was done secretly and conversions began clandestinely. Persecution was also resorted to in many cases, but the last quarter of the 19th century saw the Korean administration forced to sign treaties with western powers which guaranteed safety to foreign missionaries and permission and freedom to them to convert people. Catholics in the early years did face severe persecution when many died preaching

It was after the treaties with western powers that Protestants started streaming into Korea. Several churches sent their missionaries and soon this church of Christianity overtook the Catholics. Protestant Christians might outnumber every other religious group in the next couple of decades. Already the number of Protestants in Korea is half the number of Buddhists even though they had a very very late start.

The comparative figures (1976) of religious adherents in Korea, compiled by the Ministry of Culture and Information is : Buddhists—Clergymen

23,015 and followers 1,29,06,851 ; Confucianists-11,944 and 47,23,493 ; Catholics—4,130 and 10,93,829 ; Protestants—23,526 Clergymen and 50,01,491 followers. There are some others also like the native religion Chondogyo which has a following of a little over eight hundred thousand.

In a short time Christianity, specially Protestantism, gained immensely mainly because it was accompanied with medicare, western education, emancipation of women and modern concept of democracy. During the Japanese rule Christianity also gave a plank for anti-Japanese struggle as the Japanese had also tried their variety of Buddhism, not readily acceptable to the Koreans. Christianity gave the Koreans opportunity to benefit from the western education and what we find today is a big number of Christians in top business and professions as well as in administration. Before the Independence of Korea in 1945 education, and higher educational centres, were under Christian control and have remained so. They have done much in the social, youth, labour, medical care and women uplift fields. So much so that some of the top men in Korea are also Christians but that does not mean that Christianity is state religion.

Korea's constitution does not have a theocratic clause. The Constitution that came into force in 1948 guaranteed absolute freedom in religious affairs. The government has been assisting religious activities in the country which has also resulted in furtherance of the Christian religion because of its enormous resources and backing by several affluent western countries. Among the notable religious events were Christian Revival Explo-14 and several visits by the evangelist Billy Graham. This has lead to criticism in certain quarters also but the government has also been accused of showing apathy toward religious activities. The

government denies this and on the other hand has blamed some dissident political leaders who are alleged to have disguised their political activity, which is considered illegal, under the cloak of religion.

In Korea there are some village cults mainly based on mythical origin and beliefs. They are akin to animism and are still practised on small-scale in several areas and communities. One of the beliefs is that the founder of their nation Tangun was born out of a bear-turned woman; this is a mythological story, very interesting. Tangun was supposed to be the first man ever born in Korea. His birth year is the start of the calendar for some people in Korea.

Islam is the latest religion to go to Korea as late as 1955. It all began with the Korean War in 1950-53 when the Turkish troops participated under the UN Command for the defence of Korea. They introduced their religion and got converts. Various sects of Islam were merged under the Central Federation of Islam in Korea. There is a beautiful mosque in Seoul and another is contemplated. There have been keen efforts and the followers are increasing, though not in a big way, as yet. The number of the followers of this faith are not more than 5,000 but contacts of the Korean Muslims have already taken place with the high priests of Islam in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt etc.

In contrast to Islam the followers of the faith of Baha'i are more, about 15,000.

According to the Constitution no national or public school can impart religious education. Private schools are a different thing where religious education is given according to the organisation that runs those schools. Most of the major schools are run by missionaries of various sects and these English medium schools offer good education. They are more popular than the others as is the case in India also. The government only

promotes religious affairs as part of national cultural programme and not treat them for the purpose of educational curricula.

In a traditional society religious influence imported from outside has made significant progress and is fast changing the outlook of the people, specially in high government and professional positions.

The Unfortunate War

25TH JUNE 1950 was like any other day in my working schedule but when the Press Trust of India wire service teleprinter started sending Flash message that 'North Korea Invades South' I was alerted by my other colleagues. Any war for that matter is an exciting affair for the Press only because it is an event, a news. In that respect we newspapermen have become a little callous also. We are elated when hot news is discovered. But certain wars are different. They are not just border clashes. They have some more sinister designs behind them. The War in Korea was not on our threshold but it was no doubt an Asian affair and therefore, with deeper design. It was another reason why we in India did not like it. That war coming in the wake of the partition of the country was more unfortunate. Since that cruel war in 1950 there has not been a peace treaty even though an armistice agreement was signed three years after the war broke out.

The situation in South Korea is somewhat tense inspite of economic prosperity and progress that I saw with my own eyes while on visits to the country. Attempts to sabotage, infiltrations and other plots are discovered every now and then. The American troops, as part of the UN Command, are still stationed in South

Korea to the resentment of many nations and freedom loving people. I am sure the Koreans themselves do not like it that way and would love to see foreign forces leave as soon as possible. But at the moment this is, perhaps, a necessity, under the peculiar circumstances as the same UN Command had come to defend Korea when everything seemed lost.

I was on the day the War broke out. North Koreans attacked at 4 in the morning and advanced rapidly. The authorities in the South were not prepared for such a sudden onslaught and had to retreat. It was a Sunday when the war began on a rain-soaked border and the North Korean armed forces, backed by the Russian tanks and heavy artillery made a terrific thrust towards the South. The border vanished in no time and the thrust towards the South continued. By all accounts it was a well planned, coordinated attack and consequently the South Koreans had to fall back when it became apparent that it was no border clash but a full scale attack where the invaders outnumbered the defenders almost 3 to 1.

The Korean War was severely condemned by India and the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. India had come to the irrefutable conclusion that a large-scale invasion of 'tiny' South Korea was launched by the armed forces of North Korea.

Mr Nehru went on the floor of the Indian Parliament and his statement on the Korean situation in both the Houses of the Parliament was clear and unambiguous. He said on the 3rd August 1950 : 'Whatever the past history had been it is perfectly clear that North Korea indulged in a full scale and well laid-out invasion and this can be described as aggression in any sense of the term.'

That was a forthright and clearly enunciated policy. Nehru was then the leading figure in the world and the

undisputed leader of the non-aligned. He was telling the Indian Parliament of his impressions based on not the American reports but on the reports of the Indian representatives and delegates on the United Nations Korea Commission. These delegates were present along the 38th parallel on the day prior to and the day of the War, namely June 24th and June 25th.

With India's clear-cut stand a suspicion grew that this neutral country was won over by the American-British-French colonialists and imperialists and that India's policy has been compromised and that it was no longer non-aligned.

Nehru was asked at a press conference if that was so and he replied categorically that 'it was not so. India had never stated that it would remain neutral even if an injustice was being done.' He had stated that 'we cannot be neutral between right and wrong.'

On July 8, 1950 Prime Minister Nehru was asked by a correspondent : 'South Korea has been given moral support by India and will not the moral support given by India to South Korea indirectly help the French in Indo-China and the American in Formosa (Taiwan) ?'

Mr Nehru had replied to it quite categorically. Said he: 'Not necessarily because we had made it clear that our attitude applied to South Korea only. It may indirectly have such consequences sometimes. One cannot in a very complicated situation steer clear of all possible perils and dangers of interpretations.'

This clearly shows that even if there was some remote possibility of being misunderstood India did not hesitate in calling 'a Spade a Spade' as far as Korea and the aggression by the North was concerned.

Alas, this forthright policy was diluted on several occasions later by the daughter of Mr Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and India switched over to the policy of equidistance from the two Koreas. This was evident when-

India established full diplomatic relations with both Koreas and thereby equated the aggressor, North (according to the then Prime Minister Nehru) with South Korea which was recognised as the only lawful government in Korea. But that is politics and pressure tactics by International Communism.

Mrs Indira Gandhi also wanted to show to the so-called left and progressive forces that she was a leftist. She had time and again announced at the top of her voice that she was 'left of the Centre.' It is another story that such a declaration on her part was, and always is, a well planned part of her tactics of image-building and of expediency. As it were, the original policy had undergone a change to a large extent. An illustration could be the public meeting where one member of Mrs Gandhi's council of ministers went to the extent of praising the North Korean system and advocating its acceptance by India to transform the Indian society. What had happened to the concept of Gandhi-Nehru Framework advocated by Indira Gandhi?

There have been arguments about who really started the Korean War—the North Koreans or the South Koreans? One could argue both ways but it must be remembered that the South was in no position to attack, being ill-equipped to undertake such an offensive and to sustain it. The Americans themselves were never equipped to make a forceful show of assistance if the North Koreans, and through them the Russians, launched their offensive to capture the whole of the Korean Peninsula. Indeed whatever was there in the South was in the nature of a meek defence absolutely incapable of launching a major attack on the fully equipped North.

The progress of the War also suggested that the invasion was launched from the North. Who could sustain a long line of reinforcement and supplies if it



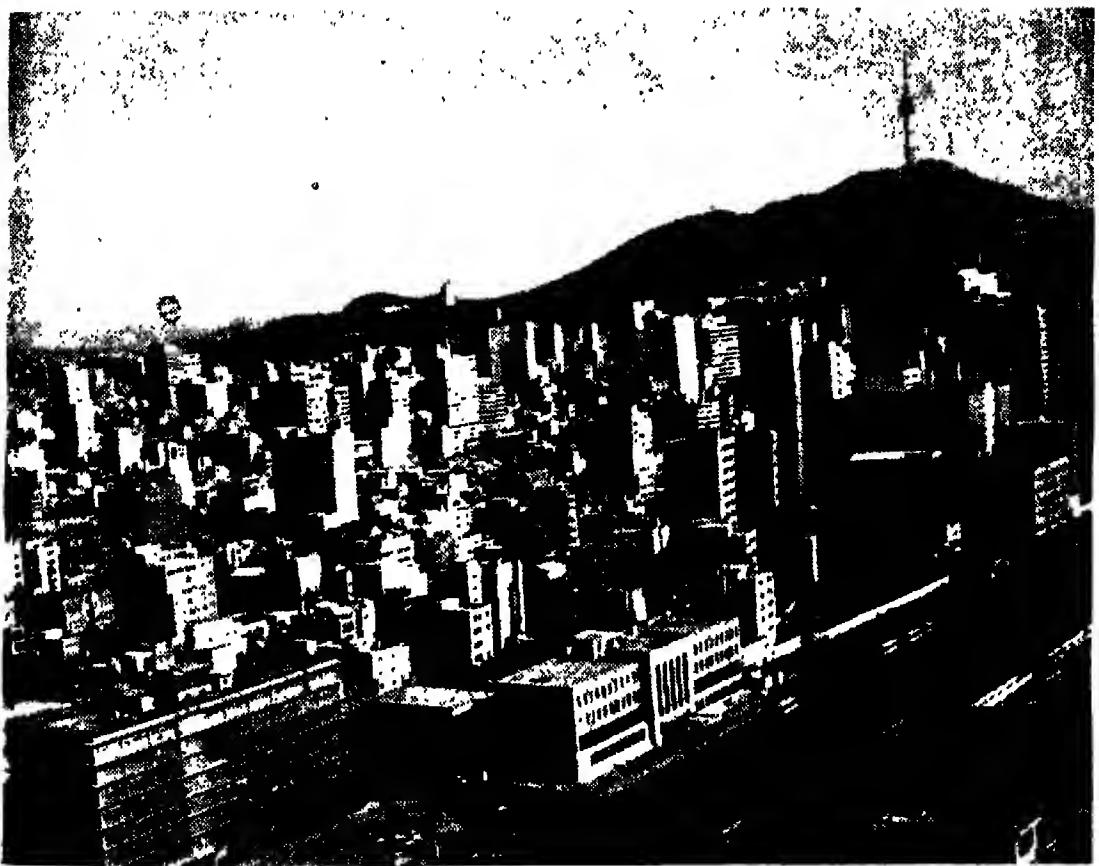
The Builder of post-War Korea, the Late President Park Chung Hee



Jawaharlal Nehru receiving the Korean Delegate for the 19th International Red Cross Conference in November 1957. H.E. Bum Suk Lee, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea was the Korean Delegate



Then—War ravaged Korea and the lone Korean



Now—Panoramic view of capital city Seoul

was not a well-planned and pre-planned invasion? The North Koreans pushed on and on and in a matter of a few days they had almost the entire Peninsula at their mercy. Surely the circumstantial evidence is also too overwhelming against the argument that South Korea might have launched the offensive. Certainly no one would be so foolhardy as to undertake a suicidal mission just for the heck of it!

Another theory also strengthens the argument that the offensive came from the North, aided and abetted by the Soviet Union. As it were during the closing stages of the World War the Soviets were clever enough to declare war on the Japanese when it was almost over because of the large scale offensive of the Americans and their allies in the East. The Soviets had an old desire to have their area of influence extended to the Korean Peninsula and the time for it was when the Americans were busy in the southern part of the Far East and Japan was tottering. The Russians, accordingly, pressed on, being well entrenched in North Korea. At that point of time they had every intention to push on and take over the entire southern part of Korea. The Japanese, near a complete collapse, could not give them a fight. Sensing the situation the Americans and their non-Communist allies accommodated the Russians and agreed to their accepting the Japanese surrender in the North, north of the 38th parallel. That resulted in the area north of the 38th going to the Russian control but at the same time they were prevented from occupying the south or the whole of Korea.

One may argue that the Americans also did not get the whole Korea and so later they launched an invasion. This argument seems hollow because of the simple fact that one does not undertake a mission which on the face of it looked futile and foolhardy. The South could only be saved by a daring landing at Inchon inspite of initial

reluctance of Pentagon; the American Defence or the State Department could never have given their approval to any scheme to indulge in a stupid exercise of inviting trouble from a powerful North. That was a ridiculous argument to blame the South and its ally.

I will concede only one argument that the South Koreans were angry at the partition of their country and had, or could have, reacted. It sounds reasonable to assume that the South Koreans were also keen to get back their northern part, to free it from the direct control and influence of the Russians. After the Japanese if it was going be the Russians what good was it going to be? One could have argued in that manner, but sentiments are one thing and action another. It is highly unlikely, and absolutely improbable, that the invasion could have been launched by the South only supported by sentiments. At best it could be said that the South was in a sullen and hostile mood and might have provoked the North. Certainly there was tension and frustration in South Korea on division of the country and stubbornness of the Soviets.

So much for the argument as to who started the War and why. The fact remains that the South Koreans became the victim of big power rivalry and the unashamed struggle for Russian and Communist domination of the entire Peninsula in utter disregard of the genuine aspirations of all the people of entire Korea. One of the biggest political crimes any country could perpetrate against another is to divide it and that too for its own desire to be the most powerful in that area. That was done in case of Korea. The War only made it worse, threatened the security of the South and has perpetuated the division of the country into two distinct halves distrusting each other.

If one goes deep into the causes of the situation Korea was facing at the time one will have to Indulge

in a bit of criticism of certain powers. In retrospect one could definitely say that the appeasement policies of nations and the majority parties have always brought about disastrous results. The same happened when Hitler overawed Chamberlain and Daladier. It was the same story when in India the Indian National Congress and its leader Mahatma Gandhi tried to appease the Muslim League and its leader Jinnah and the result was the partition of the country into India and Pakistan. In and about Korea it was the same familiar story when the powerful American nation became indifferent and soft towards a country (The Soviet Union) which was shattered during the 2nd World War but was allowed to grab territories and enlarge its area of influence. Clearly the scene shifted in favour of the same formerly war-torn country once the United States restrained itself. The US Government did not have any designs over any other country in the manner the USSR had and subsequent events have proved that. The United States left Japan and the Philippines free to pursue their own course. These two countries could have taken an anti-American stand, there was no stopping them. On the contrary the other Super Power, who became a super power only later adopting various dubious ways, never gave up the political, military and tactical advantage it got as a result of its policies, and ideological pretensions and American softness. Now it has succeeded in establishing its stranglehold over the vast areas in Europe and Asia. It is fast strengthening its hold over other areas in Asia and Africa and even South America. This is all being done in the name of anti-colonialism, socialism and communism.

In 1945 Gen George Marshall, the then Chief of Staff of US army, made a very correct assessment. He had said: 'Never was the strength of American democracy as evident nor has it been so clearly within our powers

to give definite guidance for our course into the future of Human race.' That was so but as the celebrated US General Douglas MacArthur wrote : 'In the short space of five years this power had been frittered away in a bankruptcy of positive and courageous leadership toward any long range objective. Again I asked myself—what is United States' policy in Asia? And the appalling thought came : the United States has no definite policy in Asia.'

That seems to be the reason why the other side got its stranglehold on the area which was never theirs, which could not have wanted to remain separate and divided and, I am sure, left to itself, would not have launched a full scale offensive on a part of itself.

As things stood there, on the unfortunate Sunday, the 25th June 1950, the forces of the North were speedily marching across the entire Peninsula in a swift move to drive out the opposition into the sea and proclaim a unified Communist Korea. They had nearly succeeded !

The events thereafter are too familiar to be recalled. The UN Command set up half-heartedly and Gen MacArthur given green signal, rather reluctantly, to fight back, the famous Inchon landing that turned the tide in favour of the aggrieved party—all form a heroic saga of valiant action of the UN Command under Gen MacArthur. As in Vietnam so in Korea, the United States had been half-hearted right from the beginning and the result has been one country lost to Communism and the other left nearly permanently divided. In any case at least a part of Korea, south of the 38th parallel was saved for democracy and freedom though in a state of ruin and shock. The man responsible for that victory, Gen MacArthur, was dismissed in a tussle between the arm-chair politician and the field commander, so commonly seen, but that again is another story.

The Korean War left bitter memories. Of the fratricidal conflict none could be proud. Both the parties—the Koreans—lost heavily, more so the southern part which bore the brunt of attack, saw flights of citizens southwards and then northwards, only upto the 38th parallel. Hundreds of thousands were uprooted and billions of dollars worth of property destroyed. The estimate of those killed and wounded is 2·5 million. It left a trail of misery, divided families, separate kinsmen who cannot even write to each other. It also left a legacy of most mistrusting neighbours and tension and armed subversion from the North. Even after more than a quarter of a century of the Korean War a peace treaty has not been signed. Uneasy lie the heads on both sides of the parallel, more so in the south where they have changed the entire image of the war-torn country into a happy, healthy and prosperous nation. Peace, though an uneasy one, has done wonders in the Republic of Korea, thanks also to the dynamic leadership.

The Korean War also showed one aspect of the Communist state that their citizens yearn for democracy. The over 22 thousand prisoners of War from the North Korean and the Chinese armies chose freedom than to go back to their parts of the world. They refused to be repatriated to their own country and, I am sure, many more would have chosen freedom if only they had been given more time and opportunity for a calmer consideration of the situation and proper means to assess the pros and cons. In any case the Korean War is an unfortunate chapter in the history of the Far East, of Korea. This tiny country has seen three major bloody wars in half a century and is still far from a normal-situation-with-a-normal neighbour.

What I saw in Seoul and elsewhere in South Korea was the determination to defend the country from

another surprise attack. There were, however, no visible demonstrations of armed strength but the fact remains that the capital is also under an invisible tension and preparedness for anything that might come from the North. Attempts had been made on the late President Park's life, his wife sacrificed herself during one such attempt to kill the President. Infiltrations and discoveries of underground tunnels all have startled the world. The number of violations by the North as alleged by the South Koreans are countless. There is a midnight-to-dawn curfew in the city of Seoul and the armed police keeps a watch. Though things seem to be genuinely tense life goes on normally in the city and factories, schools and streets that one is hard put to believe that there is a lurking fear of an attack from anywhere. Of course there is self confidence as the whole world realises that 1979 is not 1950. The North Koreans also know it fully well though they keep on refusing a direct dialogue with the South on all problems between the two countries.

The Korean War had for the first time presented the spectacle of a United Nations force defending a country, even though it was not a member of the world body. Since then there have been several occasions where the UN forces have kept peace, have come under cross-fire and faced other connected difficulties but Korea was the first, and so far the only instance of its kind. Some sixteen nations contributed their armed forces and another five gave medical assistance, and these included India. It was a unique gesture of fellow-feeling for one who was the victim of an un-provoked, unabashed attack and whose survival depended on the world body.

It may be pertinent to recall the names of those countries who took the side of the Republic of Korea, led by the United States of America, which contributed

the most and bore the maximum burden of the Korean War : USA, UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Turkey, Belgium, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, The Netherlands, the Philippines, Thailand, Luxemburg and South Africa contributed combatants. South Africa—till then not a UN untouchable—contributed only a fighter-bomber squadron and not the ground forces. Those who sent their medical assistance teams, field hospitals etc. were Denmark, India, Italy, Norway and Sweden. It makes a tally of 21 UN members out of the then number of 58 or so.

The world community of democratic nations, as represented by the UN Command, shed their blood to defend Korea and to attend to their wounded. It was a unique occasion and event of far-reaching consequences. A grateful nation has paid homage to the dead of the UN Command and has erected an impressive cemetery just outside Pusan. It is a unique place, the first UN cemetery in the world commemorating the dead of a score of countries. More about it on the following pages.

Col Unni Nair

BLOOD IS thicker than water, as the familiar saying goes, but blood shed for one's friendship is more valuable than if it remains in one's body. It must be the thinking of the late Col Unni Nair of the Indian Armed forces who had a role in the history of India's participation in the Korean War and peace keeping. Col Nair's death away from the mother country has become one of the cementing bonds of friendship between India and Korea. I, as one of the admirers of the role of Indian Armed Forces anywhere in the world and proud of it, could not resist the temptation of seeing his tomb and paying my respects to the man whose remains lie buried in Korea.

Col Nair was a restless man, always on the look-out for news and that took him to far off lands and action. In Korea Col Nair was better known as one of the distinguished UN officials who died during the Korean War. In India Col Nair was known as the sports editor and then the political correspondent of the daily newspaper, the *Statesman*. One of the ace correspondents in India M. Sivaram, of PTI who was a close friend and a contemporary of Col Nair, was in Korea as war correspondent during the Korean War when Col Nair laid down his life. Sivaram returned to Korea with the International Press Institute as its Consultant for

Korean Press Institute in 1964. It was Sivaram who located the tragic spot where Col Nair was killed in a mine explosion. That discovery enabled the setting up of the tomb. That tomb was one of my places of pilgrimage in Korea, the other was the UN cemetery.

Col M K Unni Nair joined the Indian Army as Public Relations Officer in 1943 at the height of the 2nd World War. Before that he was with the *Statesman* for some time. During the War he was working as Captain and a War Observer with the Mediterranean Forces. He covered the action during the landing in Italy and particularly the heroic performance of the 8th Indian Division.

Nair became Major soon after and served with the 33 Corps in Burma. That was in 1945 and he had stayed in the area as part of the 20th Indian Division. When the Allied forces crossed Chindwin and Irrawaddy rivers Major Nair was there to cover the event. His keen sense of news and his initial training and experience as newsman helped him in various ways and he became widely known.

This impetuous Indian newsman and public relations man turned soldier-observer was always prepared to take risks and go where the news was. The news came that Col Nair voluntarily offered himself to be paratrooped at Rangoon to cover the surrender of the Japanese. Col Nair was no trained paratrooper and the risky job he undertook tells the story of his undaunted courage.

Came independence of India and Col Nair found himself with the Directorate of Public Relations as its Director. With his background as a war correspondent and PR man the closeness to the Armed Forces could not be ruled out. As the Director he covered the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1947-48 in Kashmir. That was an exciting event but later Nair's first love of active journalism prevailed upon him and he re-joined the *States-*

man. When the Korean War broke out there was no stopping him and he chose to go there, again donning the uniform, and ultimately met his death doing his duty.

On my trip to Korea I had gone to Pusan and while returning visited the *Samadhi* of the Colonel. I have reported many armed forces events and am considered to be close to military affairs as Defence Correspondent. I am proud of my keen interest in the armed forces. That feeling was also responsible for my visit to the *Samadhi*.

Taegu is a fairly big city in Korea. Its bigness, or otherwise, was not relevant to me when I visited it on my trip outside Seoul. Taegu has a place in the hearts of many, many civilians and militarymen and I am sure whosoever goes to Pusan also visits Taegu.

In Taegu lie the remains of this fine man, one of India's brilliant newsman, administrator and public relations man-turned soldier. Taegu is just off the famous Seoul-Pusan Expressway and in a small field lie buried the mortal remains of Col Nair where the local administration got a tomb erected in his memory. It is a small but elegant *Samadhi* to commemorate the Indian's devotion to duty and his role in peace-keeping operations in Korea.

Col Unni Nair was sent as a member of the UN Commission and the Indian contingent when the cruel invasion took place in Korea and India was called upon to exercise its peace-keeping and supervisory role. Col Nair fell dead on 12th August 1950 when his jeep struck a mine laid by the enemy at a place called Waegan. His body was cremated next day at the spot where the *Samadhi* stands today. There were others also who had shed their blood in Korea for the establishment of peace in the war-torn country, but Col Nair was different. He was a newsman of distinction and had become the Director of Public Relations at the Indian Ministry of Defence which is close to newspapers

and the journalists. As a Defence Correspondent I am closely in touch with the Defence Ministry's public relations set up.

Col Nair was a man credited with a sharp nose for news and he was an undaunted adventurist. He was a jolly good fellow, out to take new risks as was evident from his offer to para-jump to report Japanese surrender in Burma. He did survive the jump but not the mine.

My visit to the *Samadhi* of Col Nair was a moving occasion. I was further moved to know what a common farmer had done to preserve the memory of Nair. I was told that the piece of land where the tomb stands today belonged to a local farmer. The local administration wanted to erect a fitting memorial to Col Nair and for that wanted to buy the piece of land. When the simple, farmer came to know the purpose of the purchase offer he refused to sell the land.

The farmer's stand was indeed patriotic. He maintained that for a friend of Korea who gave his life he would not sell the land, he would like to gift the piece of land for the memorial and, he prevailed upon the authorities to accept it.

The local Korean administration gratefully accepted the offer and in 1970 the *Samadhi* was erected. It is a simple and elegant monument of stone with Korean inscriptions on it.

The village where this tomb can be seen is Bum Uh Dong and the simple farmer is Kim Sang Uk. It was a fitting gesture on the part of the farmer and the government to see that a memorial is erected to one who laid his life for Korea and the restoration of peace in Korea. The tomb of Col Nair of India is far away in Korea but his countrymen do remember him for his qualities of courage and adventure. There is a Col Unni Nair Memorial Committee formed in his home state, Kerala, which was trying to set up a fellowship in co-operation with Sungok Press Foundation of Korea.

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The UN Cemetery

A CEMETERY is a place sad, serene and also moving. But when you visit the tomb of a soldier you are both sad and proud. I have always saluted the brave and mourned their loss but have also felt proud that there were heroes, the fallen dead, who gave away their precious lives so that the others could live and when the challenges are posed they too could emulate the martyrs. UN Cemetery in Pusan is such a place worth visiting and paying your homage to soldiers who fell defending ideals of freedom and democracy.

UN Cemetery in Korea is unique in many ways. It was for the first time that a part of the 'world army', if UN Command could be called that, rushed to defend a small country whose very existence was threatened. 16 countries sent their armed forces and five others their medical units to assist Korea in their war against their own brother, North Koreans, who were aided and abetted by a super power, USSR and later, another, China. It was a unique effort and a unique Command, the first of its kind.

UN Cemetery is also the first of its kind and unique. Here lie buried the remains of those foreign soldiers whose blood has mingled with the Koreans and who laid down their lives to defend a cause. The South

Korean government set apart a piece of land where all, or most of, the dead of those brave brigades have a resting place. It is for the posterity to see and admire the spirit of cooperation and help by the world community in the hour of need of Korea. It is also a lesson to the aggressor that there are times when the world community feels enraged and agrees to send their armed forces to assist someone in need.

Recently a monument was dedicated at the UN Cemetery in Pusan in honour of the soldiers who fought under the UN banner and laid down their lives, on Korean soil. Korea is grateful and will never forget those whose blood has flown down the Han river to secure for the succeeding generations a NEW Korea. Those were the crusaders, the valiant soldiers and the martyrs who came from far away lands.

As mentioned elsewhere, India sent a military medical unit, the armed forces' 60th Indian Field Ambulance, the members of which defended the defenders, cared for them, treated their wounds and mourned their loss. The Indians covered themselves with glory by their dedication to their job, their spirit of selfless service, and won the hearts of soldiers from every nation whose men were fighting under the UN banner.

In the battlefield those from the Korean army, navy, air force and the marines who laid down their lives number 2,37,686. A bronze plate mentions the fact. Another bronze plate bears testimony to the fact of Indian participation in the Korean War. On the monument recently dedicated are the words engraved: 'In memory of those members of the United Nations Forces who gave their lives in the Korean War 1950-53'. On both sides of the plate are peace doves and olive branches, symbol of peace and of the UN.

I remember at the Cemetery there were graves where names of those of the Indian army are also

mentioned who died during the War in Korea.

Any one interested in history and in Korean War and also believes in the role of a World Army—A UN Army—should visit Korea and Pusan to see the UN Cemetery. It is a grim reminder of the fate of the War but is also a reassuring sight that there were so many nations prepared to go to the aid of a hapless small half-country threatened by international communism and aggression through the other brother. A UN peace force has since become a reality and has been raised a number of times to defend peace but the one in Korea was the first, unique and will be long remembered.

Indo-Korean Relations

ACCORDING TO the former Ambassador, Dr Choi, Indo-Korean relations are very old, dating back to 4th century, when in 372 A.D. an Indian monk Marananda or Marananta, introduced Buddhism to Korea. He built three temples which still exist in Korea. Later a Korean Monk, Hecho, visited India in 727 and wrote a book entitled *Notes On The Five Regions Of India*. That is one of the oldest books in Korea on India. It has been translated into Korean and German—and by now—in English also.

The relations, though not frequent, continued and a second Indian Monk, Dhyanabhadra, son of the then King of Magadha, visited Korea in 1378. Since then no deep and direct relations existed but in modern era when the struggle for Independence was on in India and Mahatma Gandhi gave his call for passive resistance against the British, in Korea a similar call was given to the people to resist the Japanese rule. In 1919 the Koreans rose in revolt against the Japanese with a Declaration of Independence which included the non-violent aspect of the struggle. It said : 'This work of ours is on behalf of truth, justice and life, undertaken at the request of our people, in order to make known their desire for liberty. Let no violence be done

to anyone. Let those who follow us show every hour with gladness this same spirit. Let all things be done with singleness of purpose, so that our behaviour to the very end may be honorable and upright. This was the similarity of approach, on Gandhian lines, of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) and non-cooperation.

The freedom fighters in Korea were inspired to adopt the Three Don'ts from the leadership : 'Do Not Insult The Japanese ! Do Not Throw Stones ! Do Not Hit With Your Fist ! For, these are the acts of barbarians.'

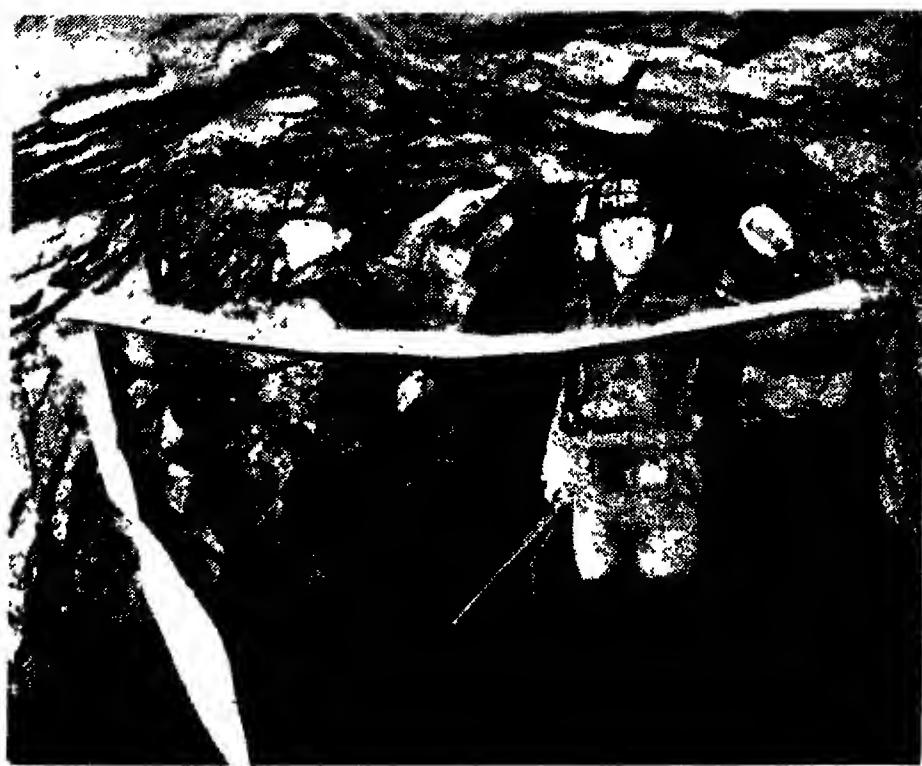
This was the nobility of the struggle. This was the height of idealism and greatness. These were the lofty heights reached by the Korean freedom fighters. These teachings seem to be from the pages of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent, passive resistance movement—that the means should be as pure as the aim.

Years rolled by and both the countries found themselves up in arms against the Japanese. The Koreans were under the Japanese and India under the British. Both had to fight, to an extent, for the rulers. But the fire that was burning underneath came upon the surface when the time came. Freedom came but with partition of the country, for both India and Korea. Both the countries are still suffering the pangs of partition, the aftermath of the division of the country. Both are in a state of perpetual war with their own halves—Korea more so because the peace treaty is still to be signed. Both the countries clamour for unification, Koreans openly and Indians very silently, for the people who demand and wish for the re-unification are branded communalists. Strange are the ways of the world, of the world powers and of those who have vested interest in perpetuating the division.

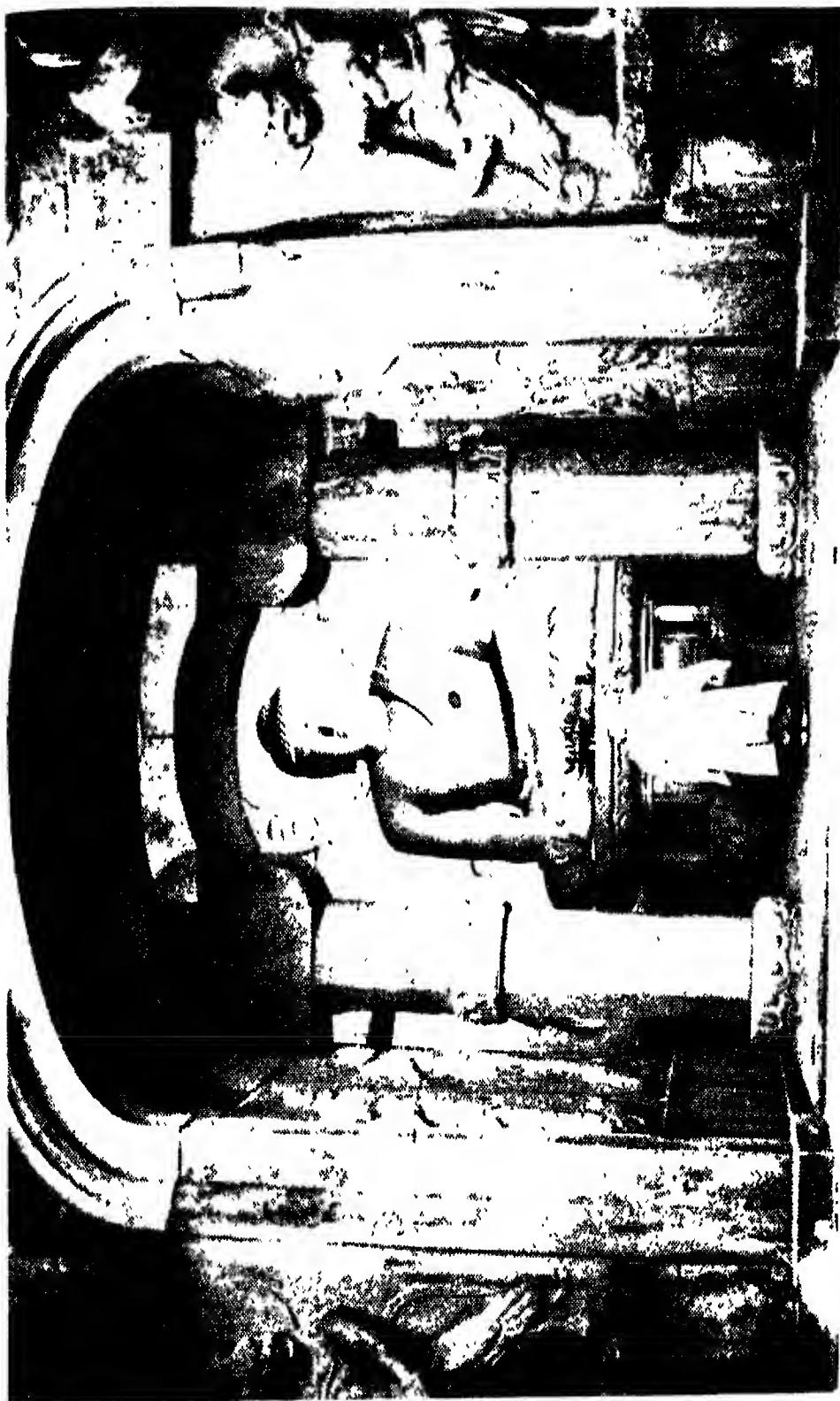
Indo-Korean similarity or relations do not end here, though my point is not to keep on harping on that. In modern times and in the age of international rivalries



Col Unni Nair with one year old daughter



North Korean Tunnels to South Korea



*Front view of The Sokkulam grotto shrine near Kyong-ju, Kyongsang Namdo.
The artificial cave temple was erected in 752 A.D. during the Unified Silla Dynasty*

and hegemonic tendency it is not easy to have the aspirations of the people fulfilled. Time will tell what course the events will ultimately take.

India and Korea embarked upon close relations during the post World War II years by sheer sweep of history. Korea was partitioned and so was India but India had started playing an important role in the United Nations which heard and resolved questions about Korea's independence. India became the Chairman of United Nations Commission which conducted elections in Korea in May of 1948 and brought about independence of Korea even though it was partitioned.

During the Korean War of 1950-53 India, as I have mentioned elsewhere also, was among the twentyone member states of UN who contributed and assisted the Republic of Korea according to the UN resolutions. Later repatriation of POWs was done under the Chairmanship of India. Thimayya, Thorat and KPS Menon were the names most familiar in Korea of those days. May be now KPS, has in a way, defected to the USSR way of thinking. The two Generals—KS Thimayya and SPP Thorat—are remembered with gratitude and admiration in Korea for the selfless, and also onerous task they did for the peace-keeping and POW repatriation work in Korea. India policed the Armistice in Korea with 5,000 Jawans under General Thimayya.

The Bangladesh War saw both countries on the same wavelengths. Korea supported India in its pursuit of peace and the independence of Bangladesh from Pakistan, which had only exploited the area and given nothing in return. In that support the Republic of Korea was victim of an attack not only directly by Pakistan but also by the North Koreans who found a strange collaboration between South Korea and the

Indian Colonialists (?). This only resulted in Pakistan recognising North Korea when the Republic of Korea had given recognition only to the realities of the situation and Bangladesh.

It was written and widely publicised in the North Korean Press that the "South Koreans were collaborating with the Indian colonialists." A report was published both in the North Korean press as well as in the Pakistan press accusing South Korea of such a 'collaboration.' The item 'by An Observer' said, in parts: "South Korea is on record to have closely colluded and collaborated with Indian expansionists and colonialists in their heinous designs to disintegrate Pakistan and support Indian dominated 'Bangladesh'."

'Acting very much in the tradition of a subservient state installed through imperialist intrigue South Korean government sold its services to the Indian War Lords much before the Indian aggression on East Pakistan on Nov. 22, 1971.'

The papers in Pakistan and North Korea then went on to list the facts of visit of a former South Korean Prime Minister Mr Chong Il Cyon to India as the special envoy, and the formation in South Korea of a Bangladesh Assistance Committee with a former Consul General of South Korea in India; those papers concluded that 'South Korea had actively committed itself to join hands with the Indian aggressors' in launching an open drive to do all that could be done to disintegrate Pakistan. The Pakistan press had then demanded the severance of Pakistan's relations with South Korea and establishment of full fledged diplomatic relations with the DPR Korea, 'the true representative of the voice of the entire Korean people.'

The Republic of Korea, unmindful of this tirade against itself, went on with a realistic and principled policy of support to the just cause. Full recognition

to Korea by India was never a condition for support on Bangladesh and it did not come for two years after the Bangladesh War. Republic of Korea had established its Consulate General in India in 1962 itself—whereas India did so only in 1969. South Korea has been persuading India in her own quiet way to raise the level of diplomatic representation. It was North Korea which opposed it, even though it meant relations had to continue with North also at a lower level. The question was finally decided by the Indian government in 1973 to raise the level of representation to that of full ambassador—and the Government of India wanted it simultaneously with both the Koreas to keep its policy of equi-distance from the two camps. It was North Korea then which had directly opposed it because it was for South Korea also. Ultimately it had to yield when the Government of India firmly told the North Koreans that if they do not want upgrading in their case they can keep quiet, India was going ahead with the decision of establishing full ambassador-level relations with the Republic of Korea.

Government of India announced on December 10, 1973 the raising of the diplomatic level. Consul General Mr Shinyong Lho at once became the Ambassador, though all the Consuls General Korea had sent till then to India were holding the personal rank of Ambassador, being very high officials.

Earlier Korea had taken part in Asia '72 in quite a big way and had impressed everyone with its charming hospitality, lilting music and economic progress. A trade promotion and economic and technical cooperation agreement had been signed almost a month before full diplomatic relations were established. It was the shape of things to come and things came in a big way. Since then exchanges at various levels and in various fields have continued, of course to mutual advantage.

Even when relations were at the Consulate General level Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea had already paid a visit to India and had met the President, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister here. These frank talks and contacts and excellent work done by the Korean Mission in New Delhi paved the way for raising the level of relations. Since then no country has looked back.

On a more practical and concrete plane Indo-Korean trade and economic relations have improved very significantly. From a paltry figure of \$8,00,000 trade jumped to \$11 million heralding new Indo-Korean relations. It was 12 times increase that left the observers surprised. Since then there has been a phenomenal growth—though not what it can be—of economic relations between the two countries. The Republic of Korea has become the second largest buyer of Indian iron ore next only to Japan. Besides, Korea has become one of the biggest suppliers of fertilizer to India. In the five years immediately preceding full diplomatic recognition the relations on trade front improved considerably with an average Indian export to Korea of \$10 million. Though this sum looks small now, it was significant in those days of half-hearted attempts because of the absence of full diplomatic relations. The future of Indo-Korean relations is still more bright.

There has been contact at the people's level also. It is not necessary that there should be a friendship association to carry on the people-to-people level contact though at times it becomes easy and direct. Korea and India have been fortunate in this respect that they have associations to foster friendship between the two countries. One of the pleasant facts is that both the countries celebrate their Independence Day on the same day, August 15.

Indian friends have rejoiced on the same day and

have celebrated for both the countries. It has been a good sort of double celebration. Till 1974 we celebrated for both but in 1974 a tragic event took place that shook and shocked Indians like me. At the National Day celebration in Seoul while the President's speech was being made an assassin made an attempt on the life of the Leader. The bullets got deflected and President Park was saved but his wife, the gracious Mrs Park, was killed. It was a cowardly act and an innocent life was lost. People in India, those who have an interest in world affairs and those who know and love Korea, denounced this attack and mourned the loss of Korea. It was a loss for the entire motherhood and the entire humanity. Acts like those in which Mrs Park sacrificed her life are to be condemned wherever they occur.

The Indo-Korea Society has, since then, been observing the day for calmly reflecting over the past and sending a message of remembrance to the President. The first time the message that was sent expressed the people's sentiments in words which I can clearly recall: 'On this day, both sacred and sad, we, the members of Indo-Korea Society, pay our respectful homage to the memory of the First Lady of the Republic of Korea, who laid down her precious life for the defence of peace, liberty and democracy and by her supreme sacrifice averted a bigger tragedy. The distinguished consort of the President of the Republic of Korea played her part nobly in the cause of her great country. She was the fragrant flower of Korean womanhood and will always be remembered fondly and respectfully for her inspiring qualities of head and heart. On the first anniversary of matyrdom of Mrs Park Chung Hee we pray to Almighty God to grant her soul eternal peace.'

This was the message sent to the President in

English as well as in Hindi, the National Language of India. It expressed the sentiments of the entire Indian people who are opposed to and aghast at political killings. Never will they forget and forgive such an act and those responsible for it have no place in any civilised society.

It was a poignant occasion. The Korean Embassy later screened a film of the whole event of the assassination attempt and the funeral. The film made a very sad scene and I am sure everyone who saw it had moist eyes. It was a cruel deed that was done to a President's wife, to a woman and to someone who was from our friendly country. The only hope I then expressed was that such a dastardly act may not be repeated anywhere. Alas, it was not to be. President Park had also to lay down his life tragically.

The Economic Miracle

THE KOREANS are capable of performing miracles is also evident from the success of their agricultural and community development programme. In industrial production and exports they have set new records that could not be surpassed easily by any country. Among the developing countries Korea has the most splendid success story any country could be proud of.

South Korea virtually has no natural resources of any appreciable size. They have a little bit of coal and a few non-ferrous metals. With scarce raw material the Koreans have worked wonders inspite of the fact that they did not have an industrial base of any notable size, whatever little they had under the Japanese was also destroyed during the Korean War.

Rising from the ashes as it were the Republic of Korea has staged a miraculous recovery and taken the country to such dizzy heights that the great industrial giant of the area, Japan, has started worrying. That they have done it in less than a dozen years and now continue to make big strides speaks highly of their hardwork, discipline and perseverance and planning.

South Korea has made all of its economic miracle by exports. The country exported its trained manpower, its skill, its hard working labour force and its

adaptability. Korea increased its power output, its fertilizer production and its textile production. It has set up big refineries without its own oil, has giant steel plants without its own iron ore. In cement of course Korea made rapid strides because of its large deposits of limestone. Cement production rose astonishingly, so much so that in a few years Korea not only became self sufficient but became a big exporter of that commodity. Chemical fertilizer was already an export item inspite of the fact that in Korea also fertilizers are being used extensively for its own agriculture.

As a matter of fact Korea has done so much for its own economic development that it is not easy to comprehend. Its outstanding success compelled the World Bank to remark : 'From a position uncomfortably close to the bottom of the international income scale and without the benefit of significant natural resources, Korea embarked on a course of industrial growth that became one of the outstanding success stories in international development, it's an achievement to continue to maintain an average rate of economic growth at 10% annually. Korean market itself is quite small and so the planners chose to go exporting and set up industrial enterprises oriented toward exports. That has paid Korea well and soon it is estimated Korea will be an outstanding exporter of the world—in the first few countries.'

The Koreans have taken full advantage of the economic assistance given by foreign countries notably the United States. The post-War reconstruction programme was carried on by the aid of US. But that was till 1960. Later the dependence on United States assistance was reduced and Korean economy started registering rapid growth.

Some of the factors responsible for the rapid growth are hard working labour force, more and more

investments, and setting up of export oriented industries. Koreans imported whatever technology and capital (mostly from Japan and United States) were required to make its economy self reliant and paying. Foreign capital and technology is always accompanied by vast experience in management and marketing. The network is almost always there to exploit.

No doubt the leaders of the free world, the affluent countries of America and Japan cooperated with Korea and helped its growth but it is also a fact that these countries themselves got in return much cheaper goods and services than what they could get from anywhere else. The Republic of Korea created good investment climate for their own expansion and production. Korea was practically free from two major hurdles in growth —labour trouble and low productivity. It helped in turn the growth of big industrial empires of Japan and the United States.

They say Vietnam War also helped the economy of Korea. It is no doubt correct that during the Vietnam War several things were needed and Korea had a share in meeting those requirements. There was need for clothes, repairing facilities, for arms and ships and aircraft, place for servicing the equipment etc. Japan also reaped a rich harvest and Korea also did not lag behind. But there were other countries also who were with the United States on the Vietnam question and they could also have done well economically but the Koreans were able to benefit the maximum.

Korea not only established an adequate industrial base for mass production it also ensured quality. It participated in world-wide competition and came out successful in several countries where it bid for contracts. Korean construction companies spread far and wide all over the Middle East and Africa wherever there was a need for them. The Korean teams have been

working hard was clear from my own experience, the one I saw in Korea myself. I am a witness to the incredible speed with which the Koreans finish a construction job. The Super Expressway constructed in only two and a half years is a record in itself. The Seoul sub-way was under construction when I was there and the fast pace of work spoke of Korean efficiency. A section being dug out one day will have been completed and work taken up on the other in a matter of weeks. One has to learn from the Koreans how to go about building a project in record time. I was told in Korea that the companies employ maximum labour to work three shifts all the twentyfour hours ; the work whenever possible goes round the clock. Hence the completion of the projects in record time.

Another factor for Korea's economic growth was the money it got for investments by way of domestic savings. In 1973-76 period the amount of domestic savings available for investment was 17% of Gross National Product. In 1977-81 period it has already shown signs of being 24% of GNP.

Korea in recent years has emerged as an industrial giant in various fields. Not only construction of hotels and residential and factory areas in the Middle East etc. the Koreans have been building huge ships and automobiles in yards and factories. In two years from 1975 to 1977 Korea's production of machines for its own use went up from 20% to 70%.

As regards export orientation in Korea's industrial outfit suffice it to say that even when in Korea there was no colour TV the Koreans were turning out colour TV sets—just for exports. They are better and cheaper for foreign buyers, No wonder in three years till 1977 export volume of Korea was doubled. Korea exports everything from human hair wigs to latest in electronic digital watches, from shoes to ships as the common

remarks are heard everywhere. That's why Korean entrepreneurs do not regard any of the developing countries as their rival, they look to Japan and the United States as their competitors. Some people may not believe that claim but so did they in case of Japan in the sixties. Probably it was relatively simple for Japan because oil was cheap, dirt cheap if you consider the present prices. The competition was also not very much. In addition there were not many countries which had protectionist tendency. Now things are difficult but the Koreans are confident and rightly depend on their labour force, their aggressive salesmanship and their imaginative management and planning. In their planning there is no room for 'Impossible' or 'We can't do that' answer. President Park himself used to oversee economic and planning projects and set goals. He may not have been flexible in his political handling of the situation and his anti-Communist view but in economic development he was most adept in keeping minimum of controls for maximum benefits to the nation. There was no ideology involved in economics. Of course economic development also meant more political victories for the President, but can one grudge that?

Another aspect of Korean efforts which has succeeded is the close liaison maintained between the entrepreneurs and the government. The government rules and regulation are conducive to economic growth and development of exports. It has several top class professionals manning its economic ministries and economic planning board. The government listens to the companies and also sets the targets for them to achieve promising them all possible assistance from official sources. The government sets targets rather high which the industrialists and entrepreneurs have to achieve. 'Can't Do' is not an acceptable term in Korea and so the targets are

attained. The President himself met the planners, the industrialists and the exporters and got things going. Nobody could say 'sorry' to late President Park who was quite a formidable person when it came to the development and safety of his country.

The Korean government and the industry take risks and in that course, like some others also, have committed mistakes. One never imagined oil to be so expensive and that ships will not be in big demand. Some times even with the foreign collaboration one is not sure if the result will be fruitful, as happened in several cases everywhere. But the Koreans have been able to accept failures quickly and rectify their mistakes. Some times they take more risks and have come out successful in several cases like the one in 1974 and 1975 when there was an uncomfortable recession in world economy.

Korea is not relaxing in its industrial activity come what may. The export figures are astonishing. From a mere \$40 million in 1961 the value of exports reached 7·8 billion in 1976 and 10 billion next year. 1981 estimates are twenty billion Dollars, a remarkable achievement if it can come true—there are many like me who are really optimistic about the goal.

I base my optimism on certain positive factors like imaginative management, hard work and ability to take risks, calculated risks. The Korean worker has worked very hard to meet export orders; he had worked for even twenty hours also. Based on this experience the Korean industrialists accepted big orders and set their production targets high. One of the prominent industrialists had a unique success story, starting his business with just \$1,000 and within six years reaching a turnover of half a billion Dollars. His 1981 estimate is 3 billion Dollars. He is a typical Korean entrepreneur, the like of whom there are many. His last year's profit was 20 million Dollars. Is it not amazing?

The clever Koreans are more calculating and aggressive. They are confident when they predict overtaking Japan in construction work and trade around the world. Given peace and tension-free future the Republic of Korea hopes to overtake many more countries of the developed west including Britain.

It will, However, not be fair to compare Korea with Japan as Japan had a very early start. Nevertheless Korea has shown what a new country with determination and dedication, intelligent management and skilful planning could do. To glance at Korean performance one has to admit the fact that, what Japan achieved in 13 years Korea did in five. Japan increased its exports to ten billion in a 13 year period (from 1955 to 1967). Korea did it in five years (1973 to 1977). The next big leap for Japan was taken by 1971 when it reached the figure of 24 billion in exports. The Republic of Korea finds the going tough with ever increasing competition, protectionist tendency on the part of many developed countries and skyrocketing oil bill. Its own population is one third of Japan but still it hopes to do the 24 billion leap by 1981-82 in the same four-year period.

The flexibility to revise and change tactics coupled with firm determination to achieve higher targets has paid rich dividends to Korea. Strengthened by it the Koreans have revised their targets upwards and their aim is to complete their five year plan in four years and increase their investments by 5% or more. Domestic savings are also targeted to increase from 24 to 27% of GNP. There is no doubt the Koreans are capable of achieving these.

One of the new areas of Korea's production and exports has been in the field of electronics. Electronic digital watches, calculators, TV sets, tape recorders, stereos are some of the large scale exports that Korea has registered. In the period 1972-76 Korea

exported electronic goods worth 2·6 billion Dollars. In 1977-81 the target is 12·3 billion Dollars.

All these will give the Koreans a per capita GNP of \$1,512 in 1981 as compared to \$530 in 1975. A big increase indeed !

Time and again the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank as well as the Export-Import Bank have praised the Korean performance, and have raised their contribution for several development projects in Korea. As recently as the last week of August the Exim Bank pleased by Korean record has given preliminary approval to a \$1,169 million credit for building two nuclear power plants. The credit is the largest in the history of the Export-Import Bank.

This speaks volumes about Korean capability to utilise the credits and to attract it by its record performance.

Korea has been progressing faster and faster. The planners are satisfied if they keep up the growth rate at around 9% till 1981. But they have reasons to be elated and feel happy as the growth is consistently that high, even as high as 15% and that's why the optimism. The plans of five years are fulfilled in four years and the targets are constantly raised and reached.

Now all eyes are turned to the performance in 1981-91 period which may again astonish the world. Koreans are poised to and capable of a big leap and it may be a mighty big leap. Till the last plan term (1976) Korea had a six fold increase in industrial production and the plan targets have been left behind by a good 30 to 400%. 1967-71 plan stipulated growth in GNP as 7% and the achievement was 11·3%. The next plan (1972-76) had 8.8% plan target and the result was 11%. Exports also had 17·1 and 24·1% growth targets for the two plans, the achievement was 33·8 and 32·7%. Imports, so necessary for the export oriented produc-

tion growth, had in industry and mining sectors, a not too modest target of 10·7 and 13·0% in the first two plans and the result was 20·8 and 19·9%. There is no reason why the next two plans should not do a bigger and better job because Korea is now better equipped and the export and production strategy is much more sharpened.

One of the reasons, as has been acknowledged every where in the world, is greater productivity of the Korean workmen. It has been estimated that the average Korean worker works for more than 13 hours a day, on an average, whereas his counterpart in the west only 8 hours a day. One of fellow journalists, Hakan Hedberg of Sweden, had this fact to prove the Korean workman's case : He is better educated than a European or American worker; He uses more modern machinery than his counterpart in other European, Latin American or Asian country, with very few exceptions. In one year he works four months more (because of his longer hours) than his European colleague, without taking account of his overtime ; he is cheaper than his colleague from any other developed country—for overtime he gets only on tenth of that of a German, French or Swedish workman.*

Further explaining this more work-more output theory of the Korean vs the European/American it means :

An average European worker is on duty for 1768 hours of work (out of 365 days he does not work for 104 Saturdays and Sundays, 30 days of leave, 10 other off days,) and the Korean counterpart works for 2,424 hours (52 Sundays, 10 other holidays). The annual difference is over 650 hours or four months of extra work. An average Korean worker is also comparatively sickness-

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free, he is more healthy, and consequently the number of man-hours lost in Korea are insignificant.

That's why I maintain that Korea will have much bigger production in the next decade and much bigger exports in the same period 1981-91.

Talking about Korean exports they will certainly overtake that of the Soviet Union, (250 times more area and eight times more population, hundreds of times more natural resources) by 1987. In 1975 USSR exported goods of the value of 33·3 billion dollars and that includes the enormous oil exports whereas Korea has none. That year Korean exports were a seventh of the USSR exports and within a span of 12 years the tables are most certainly going to be turned.

Brains and brawn have joined together to bring about this revolution in Korean economy.

A glance at the latest figures of Korean life will prove the giant growth of the society and its economy. Before the 1960s the Republic of Korea had a low per capita income of only \$70; the growth rate and the rate of savings was also low, but between the period 1962-1978 an amazing change took place as the whole world knows. In 1978 per capita GNP rose to 1,242 Dollars, and GNP to 46 billion Dollars, from 2·3 billion 17 years back. No doubt the consumer price increase also is of the order of 14% but then the growth rate is also 11·3% and domestic saving rate of 27% and commodity exports up by 28% are also to be taken into account. In a high rated economy prices are bound to rise but then the government has also shown its determination to keep them in check. Price stability is the number one concern of the government now and with the determination and imaginative planning it is very likely that the price line will be firmly held.

The planning for this year (1979) is \$56 billion of GNP at current prices and per capita GNP of \$ 1,500.

Exports are planned to go up to \$ 15·5 billion and the ratio of investments to GNP up to 30%. That is a very good augury and will surely pave the way for the glorious 80s.

The miracle of South Korea becomes more formidable when one views the progress made in North Korea. There is more area in the North of the 38th parallel but the population and the economic activity is much less. The population in the North which was 9·7 million in 1945 increased to 15 million in 1975. In contrast the population in South Korea which was already more than 16 million in 1945 grew to about 35 million in 1975.

Before the liberation in 1945 some of the major industrial centres were in the North. They were also more in numbers. For example there were 18 centres for chemical industry in the South and 82 in the North. Then the number of units of metallic industry was 90 in the North and only 10 in the South. Only in textile, mechanical, food and printing industry there were more units in the South. The North was much more industrialised than the South but what is the position and the results today? The economic growth gives the answer. The South has left the North far behind.

About the mineral resources a glance at the figures will show that the North was much more endowed with these than the South. There were gold and silver units with a percentage of 72·7 in North Korea and only 27·3 in South Korea. Iron resources had much more gap; North Korea had 99% of all the iron ore in the whole country. Similar is the story of tungsten, bituminous coal, anthracite and others making the grand tally of 89·7% in the North and only 10·3% in the South. Inspite of these disparities the achievement of South Korea is stupendous.

In agriculture, of course, the South had more than the North, a ratio of 63 to 37.

In the years following the Armistice the gap between

the North and the South widened and the results showed the success of South Korea's capabilities and imaginative planning. The closed society and the 'socialist' system of the North lagged behind considerably. Industrial growth rate was 29·4% in the South and 18·3% in the North. Defence expenditure was 2·9% of the total budget in the South and the North replied with a 7% expenditure. In sum there was a remarkable rate of progress by the South Koreans as compared to the North Koreans in a period between 1961-68. The gap has widened and now the situation is much more flattering for the South and dismal for the North.

A glimpse of the Industrial Profile of the South is as follows :

	1978	1981
Iron and Steel production	6·9	13·5m m/t
Oil Refining capacity	580	1,040 thou BPSD
Cement Production	15·5	26·6 m m/t
Road pavement Ratio (roads managed by the central government)	60	91%
Available houses	5·3	6 m units
Cargo handling capacity	65	93 m m/t
Power generation	6·9	10·4 m/kw

A good pointer for the next decade !

The Prosperity Road

I HAVE not come across any road in Korea by the name of 'Prosperity Road' yet when I travelled on a particular road (and what a road !) it sure told me that it has brought prosperity to even the remote interior of Korea. That is the 428 km Seoul-Pusan Expressway which is not just a road—lifeless path made of stones, bitumen, mud and cement. It is a part and parcel of the whole economic, political and social fabric of the country. It is the life and part of it, it is the life-line of Korea that has changed the entire face of the country and has given the economy the much needed boost. Normally the remote countryside is neglected but not so in Korea, and since the expressway was built the villages have experienced a new life—full of hard work but also full of promise. Some of the promises have certainly been kept. The Korean economy has been transformed, to a great extent.

The expressway is the driver's dream and a tourist's wish. It is the strong and dependable artery of a nation that has come a long way since the Korean War and amazed the world with its phenomenal growth in production, distribution and exports. It is a very beautiful road amidst the hills and through the numerous tunnels. It stretches from Seoul (with an extension to

Inchon) and goes to Pusan, the south-eastern port and the second of the special cities—the other being the capital Seoul itself.

This amazing expressway was completed in a record time of two and a half years. The time taken to build this highway is nothing if you just look at the highway and the area it had to pass through. The expressway is not only lovely, it is sturdy and wide—with four lane traffic. There is ample space between two sides and enough for further expansion, if need be. It is picturesque as it passes through lush green countryside of Korea and of course through lofty hills. As I was driven on the road I saw endless hills and greenery which are both captivating and stimulating.

Construction of Seoul-Pusan Expressway mobilised about 9,00,000 man-days. It used 1,60,000 units of heavy equipment. The entire 428 km of the road has 42 bus stops, 281 small bridges, 29 large bridges and 6 tunnels. There are interchanges, culverts, and cattle passes also. The road cost the national exchequer in the year of its construction (1970) over Rs. 86 crores (42,973 million Won). It has contributed to the national wealth and economic growth several hundred times the money spent on it.

As one drives on the expressway in bus or private car, one is captivated by the scenic beauty. The long drive gave me a chance to have a glimpse of the beauty of the countryside, the charm of the people. No wonder Korea had attracted over 4,00,000 foreign visitors in 1973, more than double the number in 1976 and reached one million in 1977.

After this Super Expressway there have been a couple of equally important highways built and dedicated to the service of the people. Chonju-Pusan coastal route was opened later. It is a 358 km highway, two lanes. Later Singal-Kangnung highway of 201 km was opened in

1975. It cut into the Taebaek mountain range and has become the means of exploitation of the rich mineral and marine area. With another 84 km highway connecting Taegu and Masan total highway length has reached 1,232 km. These came after my trip to Korea and the total number of vehicles that used these highways for tourism, transport of goods and passengers had reached 20 million in 1976. The same year the Highway Corporation netted an income of \$ 30 million.

President Park himself opened some of the highways to public use and described these expressways as the main artery of the national modernisation programmes which will bring about a balanced development of the rural communities as well as far reaching reforms in the nation's economic structure.

These expressways have really opened up rural areas and have transported millions of tonnes of their produce to far flung markets in Korea and the wide world. Just two years after the opening of the Seoul-Pusan Expressway I found in a single day hundreds of buses, trucks and other vehicles plying between the two major centres. Since then goods-carrying-trucks have outnumbered the passenger carrying cars, thereby proving that the road is playing an increasing role in the wider economic transformation of the country and not only development of tourism.

On the way I asked my guide Kim whether the roadside small houses were tourist cottages. I was pleasantly surprised to know that they were the houses of farmers and not some sort of tourist homes which usually are comparatively more attractive. Those farmers' houses looked small but neat and tidy, not mud houses at all, a far cry since the days of feudal overlords. Those farmers apparently had benefited from the expressway, they have been able to send their products to far off areas more easily, cheaply and speedily.

They have started tasting the fruit of hard work of the nation. A farmer's main difficulty after a period of hard work in the field is marketing. Villages are usually far flung and cut off from the main roads but the expressways and other smaller, but well connected, roadway systems have solved this problem. The farmer is now able to market his product himself if he so chooses. It has really given him a new life and the national economy a new push.

Apart from the farm produce, marine products and the produce of factories have got good transportation facilities. New vistas of commercial and business exchanges have opened and have heralded an unprecedented era of growth and production, and of course exports.

In addition the whole Korean countryside has also developed as tourist attraction for its scenic beauty and splendour of places of historical importance. I visited many off-the-main road places myself which otherwise could be less accessible.

This amazingly attractive and useful expressway was not built without sacrifice. The grateful Koreans remember those who laid down their lives so that the others may live and prosper. I am not writing about the lives lost in the Korean War but about those who died building this expressway. The grateful nation has got a magnificent monument erected in memory of those men and women who were pioneers in building this highway. Many hills had to be blasted and rocks cut and in that process many workers died. At a point exactly half way—at 214 km mark—is the place called Chu Pu Ryung. There is a granite tower 30'80 metres high, beautifully conceived and executed. There is ample open space where facilities for relaxing, eating, filling the car tank etc exist. The tower can be seen from a distance—but not from a great distance because

of hilly area and the tunnels. It is a huge artistic monument and the exquisite murals depict the hard working men and women who dedicated their precious lives for the future of the nation.

I was deeply touched to see the splendid structure telling the story of hard work and sacrifice of the people. The place is indeed fascinating and adds to the glamour of the grand Expressway which I rightly called 'The Prosperity Road.'

24

Making Of A New Community

INDIA FOR long has experimented with a community development programme to uplift the vast population in the villages to some respectability. The programme and the goals are gigantic and the resources meagre. Consequently progress was not uniform. After the March 1977 elections the new government had given more attention to rural areas and more money was allocated to schemes for the villages. It is a big challenge.

Korea had also accepted a challenge to transform the rural life and peasantry for a better tomorrow. The new Community Movement called 'Saemaul Undong' is a nationwide campaign to raise the villager's income and the standard of living. It is to make him aware of the development in the country so that he is able to participate better in the administration of his country, his province or his community. He has to discard his age-old conservatism and pessimism and to work for an ambitious programme of hope and confidence in the future based on solid present.

The Saemaul Undong aims at more production, more productivity and better distribution to achieve prosperity for the peasant and the country. Unlike some other countries the community movement does

not confine itself to village people but is extended to urban areas also. The basic stress remains on the 'better farming' programme.

It was President Park himself who initiated the idea of community development through self help, cooperation and hard work. The rural communities, as everywhere in a traditional society, are slow to accept any change in their methods of living, farming and even thinking. The Saemaul movement aims at a change—for the better. Korea is a small country with not much land for everyone to till and farm on. The natural thing is to emphasise intensive cultivation, improved methods of farming, more intelligent use of inputs, better marketing and better utilisation of resources, and cooperation in all spheres. The population keeps on increasing and old methods are becoming increasingly counter-productive. The Korean society without claiming to be socialist wants to improve the lot of the common man, the poorest of the poor, wants to bridge the gap between the rural poor and the urban rich. It has to take to methods which are solid, help a self-generating economy and by narrowing the rich-poor gap eliminate the seeds of future conflict and social, political and economic tension.

The Korean community development programme Saemaul Undong has tried to do it !

The programme was practical, impressive and yet simple, directed toward the farming community and the common man. The main aim was to modernise the agricultural practices, improve rural setting and infrastructure, to establish village industries and give full employment to those who remain under-employed during the slack seasons. With the aim of proving to the community its practicability the programme had to show immediate results and to prove that it is for the people for their own needs.

India's Panchayati Raj programme idea given by Mahatma Gandhi was also centered round the village community. The improvement schemes should not be imposed from the Planning Commission but should originate from the village community. In Korea the village councils were formed to decide on their own priorities. In this way a Rice Roots Democratic Movement started in a big way engulfing the whole community life in the entire country.

The government saw to it that the villagers and their counterparts in small urban communities spoke up and decided about their programme taking into account their resources and peculiar local needs. The government filled the gaps in planning, studies of feasibility of a particular scheme, technical advice, supervisory skill and, of course, much needed equipment. The government made it clear that it would give financial assistance also for some particularly big projects provided the community came forward with similar contribution. The plan started working.

The villages were on the march !

Village after village came up with their suggestions, their priorities of bridges, roads, community halls, market places, baths and laundries, piped water, tube wells etc. The progress initially was slow for obvious reasons—initial apathy, inexperience and paucity of resources, both technical and material. In two years time the teething troubles were over and a sound programme of transformation of the community into a modern, pulsating and dynamic society was in full swing. More ambitious and far reaching programmes were launched, more funds and technical services were placed at the disposal of those entrusted with the task of this village revolution. Small holdings were consolidated which was one of the needs of the hour. This

facilitated use of modern equipment. Improved seeds and other inputs like fertilizers and insecticides were made available in the required quantities and an effective system of irrigation was introduced. The plans worked satisfactorily and the example of one community was emulated by the others. The saying 'what you can do I can do better, seem to have pervaded the entire countryside of Korea, and with amazing results.

Farming improvement also necessitated improvement in environment and housing. Old straw roofs gave way to new tiles or other sheetings. The new ones are more lasting, clean, comfortable and safe though the thatched ones may be a novelty for a tourist from an affluent country. During my drive on the Expressway and right through the Korean countryside. I do not remember to have seen a single straw roof anywhere.

The cultural aspect, so dear to the hearts of the Koreans, was also not lost sight of. All the village shrines, cultural assets and temples and monuments were renovated, repaired and decorated. Old ladies and children lent a helping hand in cleaning up of the environment, planting flower beds and beautifying the places of community life. In the programme of uplift everyone had a place, his or her importance and use.

The rural industrialisation and rationalisation continued at a fast but sure pace. A proper identification for purposes of cooperative effort for production was taken up and soon specialisation on a limited scale started. One village was found most suited for mushroom cultivation, the other for silk worms rearing. Yet another was selected for processing of local vegetables. It was done more systematically raising the productivity and income of the people. By 1974 some 13 million man-days had been made available for community development programmes. Nearly all the

35000 villages were given government financial help upto \$60m. A total of \$350m worth of projects were completed.

The progress was on sure footing and now was the time for bigger projects of far-reaching implication and importance. By 1975 end the number of man-days utilised were more than 332 million. Every participating village had launched an average of 28 projects, big, medium and small. In 1976 cities were also taking interest in the movement as also were schools, workshops and military units. Training schemes were launched and the institutional base was strengthened. In nearly a decade Saemaul Undong has done a revolutionary transformation of the community and also attracted world wide attention. Observers from many countries have seen the community working in Korea and have tried to translate and assimilate that into their own set up.

Korea is a traditional society, by and large. It has its own peculiarity and one cannot claim that the movement has achieved completely what it aimed to do. There are bottlenecks, at times inadequacy of resources to make still swifter progress. The movement itself was launched not long ago, only nine years back.

Saemaul Undong is a comprehensive programme of social uplift also and has been a turning point even in the family planning programme. Numerous people from foreign countries, including the VIPs from the developing and the developed countries, have visited these projects which are varied in nature and impressive in magnitude. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations had a special word of praise for the programme which made such an impact on those who are involved in it and those who only saw the results. It has brought about a green revolution of more food, white revolution of more milk products, yellow revolu-

tion of more money and pink revolution of all-round beauty of the people and the country—if I may give my own interpretation.

The movement was conceived in 1970 but started only in 1971. It took to its roots very rapidly and after five years was able to register an increase in the per capita income of the village folk. It became higher, for the first time, than that of the urban worker. In 1977 the situation was so fascinating that the President remarked at his press conference that the countryside, with all modern amenities plus the clean air and beautiful, serene landscape, is rapidly turning out to be a better place to live than the cities.

It was a tribute to the farmer participants in the Saemaul movement and the acknowledgement of the success of the movement by the President himself. He had conceived the idea in 1970 and at a conference of provincial Governors the President had said:

‘This programme differs from similar programmes in some of the other countries in that it started without a theoretical base; on the contrary it laid stress on the practical side of it and only after a considerable amount of progress was registered that attempts to theorise the whole programme were made and the scheme’s implementation institutionalised. The other reason for its redoubtable success could be traced to its basic Korean character, local origin and inspiration without importing foreign elements in its conception and popularisation. If we can create and cultivate the spirit of self-reliance and independence and hard work, I believe that all rural villages can be turned into beautiful and prosperous places to live...’ Now the Saemaul movement is strong and the spirit is officially called the Spirit of diligence, self help and cooperation.

In 1970 it was conceived, next year it was launched experimentally and the full scale implementation started

only in 1972. Its firm base was established in 1973 when all the 34,665 villages started participating in it, making it a nationwide movement. Soon it became an all pervasive movement embracing all the activities for comprehensive development of the society. There were set up Saemaul Central Consultative Council, Saemaul Leaders Training Institute, Saemaul National Educational Programme, Saemaul production units, Saemaul provincial consultative councils, Saemaul villages, Saemaul Technical Services etc. all aimed to change the entire face of the community and the country. They have succeeded to a very large measure and it could be ascertained from the following facts compiled for the fourth five year economic development plan (agriculture sector) : figures for 1971-76 : National per capita income was \$213 in 1971 and rose to \$560 in 1976 ; Agriculture growth rate 2·2% and 7·6% ; annual income per farm household : \$813 and \$2,409. rice yield per hactare : 3·3 metric tonnes, 4·3 mt., number of power tillers : 17,000 and 1,22,000 and agricultural exports : \$ 38 million, \$ 222 million. The aim is to increase the income to \$ 3,000 by 1981. One may get bored with facts and figures but they speak for themselves and for the success of the movement. The movement succeeded in arousing the people's own interest in making them self reliant and the fact that they contributed 42% of all the investment is ample proof of their spirit of cooperation and self-reliance. It has raised the morale of the people, awokened self confidence, promoted cooperative spirit in them and prepared them for still greater effort for the betterment of their lot and that of their country. The guiding slogan has been "We Too Can Make It". It has worked !

The Builder Of Post-War Korea

THERE MIGHT not be many who love democracy and freedom yet would favour a military man to replace the civilian government. The tendency of such a man would be to capture power by any means and to stay put there. After all the whole training of a man of the armed forces is oriented in favour of marching, capturing and staying. One could say the same thing more or less for the late President Park Chung Hee who marched his men, got the real power for himself and stayed put there for 18 long years. But there is a vast difference also and one must look back on those years.

That had happened almost two decades back, in 1961 to be precise. President Park was then a Major General of the Korean Army which came to power in circumstances which can be best described in a word as 'chaotic.' Korea had suffered the domination of foreigners for years and when finally it was liberated from the Japanese it found itself partitioned. Liberation, partition and then worse was to come in the form of the Korean War which ravaged the nation. Even after the Armistice things worsened in the seven-year period mostly headed by the aged Syngman Rhee. President Rhee had inherited a war-torn, divided, shat-

tered country predominantly agricultural. It was constantly under the threat of subversive activities which continued even after the War had ended.

President Rhee had been a freedom fighter and a respected name in Korea but conditions, advisors and old age conspired to unmake him. A great leader like Sheikh Mujibur Rahman of Bangladesh could lose his hold, and even his head, within three years after reaching the zenith of his popularity. President Rhee also started losing ground fast and he was openly criticised for the elections he had won as rigged, managed through the help of military and the police. The 1960 elections sparked a nationwide movement of students and others which forced President Rhee to resign. More unrest followed and even the well-meaning students lost all sense of direction.

During the last couple of years of Rhee rule the armed forces were called time and again to quell riots and restore peace and order. The threat from the North loomed large and looked real. It was a situation when the civilian government found itself utterly incapable of governing the country without the active help of the army. In times like that many would think of bringing the military to administer. The obvious and inevitable happened in Korea and the armed forces came on top.

May 16, 1961 change-over to the army was in a way perfectly legal and constitutional as the Martial Law etc. were formally proclaimed by the then President Yun under the authority of the then government. One could take a legalistic stand in this matter as whatever happened was under the framework of existing laws though I would still regard it as a military take over. It is, however, perfectly clear that situation in Korea was so chaotic and unstable that any military commander could have thought of taking over. The North had stepped

up their offensive, both political and psychological, in addition to armed infiltration and subversion. In the prevailing situation no civilian leader could give hope and assurance and confidence to the people. General Park and his associates were able to do that in words and deed and politicians who could not prove their worth were thrown into the dustbin of history. Park's revolutionary committee promised civilian rule as soon as possible.

General Park did usher a sort of civilian rule and himself resigned from the armed forces to lead the country as President. He did not look back for 18 years—and could have gone on but for the assassin's bullet—and I am sure the country as a whole has no reason to regret these past 18 years.

Park Chung Hee was neither an extrovert or colourful nor a flamboyant leader like the world has seen in some other countries. We had an Idi Amin, a Bhutto and a Yahya Khan. Some others were supposed to be great idealists, internationalists. We have seen ruthless authoritarians also who threw their political opponents behind prison bars without trial. In President Park Chung Hee Korea found a leader who was firm and practical, determined and also a staunch nationalist who dreamt and worked for a strong and prosperous Korea. He saved the country from external threats and economic bankruptcy. From shattered and chaotic conditions he gave the country hope and confidence, economic prosperity and dignity. He took the Republic of Korea to dizzy heights as a strong, dependable, hard-working and viable country holding its own before any one else.

One may argue that the President was able to retain his hold over the administration and the armed forces by all means, fair and foul, and had taken recourse

to weaken the opposition by methods too brutal and coercive to be adopted by a democratic regime. One can also not find fault with the argument that President Park's regime did smack of authoritarianism and high-handedness. Democracy in Korea is an eyewash was also one of the other arguments against the government of President Park. As a democrat myself I tend to disfavour any authoritarian trend and attempts to limit democratic activities. However, the situation in Korea was entirely different from that obtaining in India or may be in some other countries in the West with no external threat and no possibilities of internal subversion organised by the enemy. The situation in Korea was totally different from the normal condition of a normal country. That's why till the threat exists I tend to tolerate whatever semblance of authoritarianism is there; after all nobody would grudge the government's firm handling of the situation that prevailed in Korea.

There is another big difference between things in Korea and normal authoritarian behaviour. I will brand one as autocratic and authoritarian if the absolute ruler rules absolutely and furthers the interests of his or her kin and promotes him or her for a high post, eventually as the head of the administration, overlooking the other more trusted, tried, senior persons. Then there comes the question of extra-constitutional centres of power as had happened in some countries, including India during the Emergency rule of Mrs Gandhi. This did not happen in Korea. That's what make Korea different from the others. It is no use shouting from housetops that you are a democrat and do just the opposite.

Nobody, to my knowledge, had accused President Park of misusing his official position to further his own personal or family interests or to amass own wealth. He did not further the political ambition of any of his

kinsmen and did not indulge in personal behaviour of a low standard, all in the name of private life. Then where is the question of questioning his methods which may not be upto the highest copybook standards of democratic behaviour and may sometimes sound ruthless? In special circumstances special steps have to be taken to preserve freedom, normal economic and social activities which are strictly for the prosperity of the nation as a whole and not that of a few individuals. That's exactly what the late President had done.

In his effort to get things going, his attempts to transform a war-torn, shattered country and to take it to dizzy heights of progress and an honoured place in the comity of nations, Park had to face numerous attempts on his life by misguided and enemy infiltrators etc. In that process he saw his wife dying with a shot that was meant for him. How deeply moved and shattered a man could be to see his better half, his life-partner, being killed before his eyes by some one who wanted to kill him. With nerves of steel the President had continued with his address to the nation on that tragic day in 1974. It was indeed shocking even beyond words and condemned by every right-thinking person in the world. That was the price the President had to pay for his firmness, his patriotism and his intentions to take the country to the unbelievable heights of prosperity. He paid the price with his own life ultimately.

It was President Park's initiative, intense desire and leadership that has changed the face of the country and the countryside (with his Saemaul Undong Movement). The picture of Korea today is that of a vibrant, inspiring and strong country capable of holding its own against anyone in the world. The other half of Korea, the Northern part, also has to fear and think a hundred times before embarking upon another

adventure of the kind launched in 1950. That is the contribution of Korean leadership which till recently was headed by President Park Chung Hee. The fact that the nation rallied at the dreadful, tragic and sudden disaster of his murder speaks volumes about the maturity of the nation and its leaders.

Some used to say that Park was not a democrat. He may not be so in the strict sense of the term but facts are facts. So far as democracy is concerned it is expressly written down in the Korean constitution that came about as a result of the referendum of 1972 that Korea is democratic and that sovereignty is vested in the people. Moreover the constitution guarantees the basic rights and freedoms of the people to the utmost. and has thus put a limit to the powers of the executive. Civil rights could only be restricted by law only when absolutely necessary for the maintenance of national security, public order or general welfare. There is the provision for freedom from arbitrary arrest. There are also some other freedoms like that of speech, press, religion, assembly, conscience etc. A constitution like the one Korea has is not very common in several countries in Asia, Africa and South America ; moreover it is totally absent in the so-called socialist countries. Every country like Korea is entitled to a constitution of its liking but there are some good, universally good constitutions also. As for the limitations of the constitution and its interpretation no country is free from criticism, including India, which perhaps has one of the best framed constitutions in the democratic world. It was also distorted during the Emergency and everything was supposed to have been done under the constitution, legally.

The President of Korea is, according to the constitution, all powerful, subject to some restraints by the

constitution itself and is responsible to the electorate—the people. The Korean President can also dissolve the National Assembly and declare an emergency and martial law but these emergency powers can only be exercised subject to the approval of the National Assembly. Mention must be made here of the National Conference for Unification which is the baby of the new constitution which came as a result of the referendum. It is a pan-national body comprising the representatives of the people from all walks of life. It is composed of between 2,000 and 5,000 delegates elected through direct suffrage. There are 2,583 delegates at present. They were called upon to choose a successor to President Park. This is a unique, 'super body' not found anywhere in the world but as they say in Korea that they do not want a western type democracy, what they want, and will have, is a Koreanized democracy. They are certainly entitled to it. The only point is that it should be a democracy.

President Park was an able handler of foreign policy matters and he had good advisors in Foreign Minister Park Tong-jin and others. There was some good handling of delicate matters like the one of withdrawal of American troops from Korea. There are some 35,000 American troops stationed in Korea under the banner of UN Command but it had become fashionable for the Americans to ask for the withdrawal of their soldiers specially after the Vietnam debacle and subsequent pull out. President Park, in summer this year, had talks with the American President and got most of his terms accepted by the US government. He not only was able to strengthen his position but also eliminate fears of a North Korean adventure from the minds of the South Koreans once the American troops are pulled out from the Korean soil. There might be a genuine fear of another invasion from the North, I am

sure, once the Americans withdraw, but that's a gamble one has to indulge in if the emotional aspect is also to be taken care of.

As President Park proved that he was a man with ideas and a will to put them to practice he gave a call to the nation 'We Too Can Do It' and it worked. It really transformed the whole countryside and economy. He had given a call for unification and proposed dialogue with the North Koreans—for a peaceful re-unification and not an armed solution. His main concern during the last decade particularly was to see that the Republic of Korea was modernised and strengthened to face external attacks and economically able to match any in the world. That he succeeded to a very great extent is self evident.

President Park had enthused everyone to contribute his or her might for the regeneration of the country which, as he used to tell, was yet to regain its full stature in the comity of nations as it is still divided. The leader did not promise fruits without hard-work. One of the greatest leaders of modern India, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, told his countrymen when he raised the Indian National Army to march against the British : 'Give Me Blood And I Will Give You Freedom.' President Park had also given a similar call. Said he : 'A generation aware of its mission should know only exertion and effort. We have to give our sweat and blood but the reward of our dedication in sweat and blood will be the opening up of a new era of affluence, peace and unification. We will be a society without scarcity, a nation without fear of war, a proud member of the international community capable of helping the less fortunate. We will secure a proud legacy to hand down to our posterity.'

President Park had said very clearly that the Koreans never asked for the division of their country.

Actually it is the ideology of international Communism that has divided the country. Often we blame international colonialists, imperialists etc for dividing a country but in case of Korea it was Communism which got Korea partitioned.

Park had a near view, a deep insight, into the methods of the Communist armies and their tactics. He had his tough training and effective postings at places which bore the brunt of the Communist Chinese pressure and their tactics. He was made aware of their ruthless ways and that helped him in moulding his own armies to stand up to the Communists later in the years. One of his earliest achievements was the study and a report which had given a clear indication of the Red offensive of 1950s. In the closing years of the 40s he was asked by his Chief to prepare a situation analysis report on the military agreement between the Chinese and the North Koreans. Park was familiar with the short and long-term objectives of the Communists. The report that he submitted to his Chief was an eye-opener and spoke volumes about the military prowess and deep insight of the then 33 year old officer, Park Chung Hee. The report said (in parts) : 'The North Koreans may launch a massive invasion of the South most probably in May or June of 1950. The invasion will be preceded by political manouevring. The enemy will have Chorwon, Yonchon, and Yijong-wu as main targets, from the flanks they will attack Keisong, Munsan, Seoul and the other front will be Chunchon, Wen-ju and Suwon cutting the retreat line of the ROK troops.'

The 100 page report is a historic document which also exactly pin-pointed the North Korean targets. It reached the then President Syngman Rhee through the Army Chief and the Defence Minister but none seemed to have given any credence to the report as an

invasion looked to them absolutely unlikely, The Minister of Defence Shin Song Mo used to brag about it saying that if the North Koreans ever thought of launching an attack we shall capture Pyongyang within a week. This tall talk pleased the senior officers who thought young Park had given an unnecessarily panicky and foolish report to down their morale.

Events proved the report to be absolutely correct. Major Park was at the time of the attack in Taegu which he did not like as it was not a place to spend his time doing nothing. In a matter of days Park was summoned to the HQ to re-organise the Korean contingents. The Chief's message was brought to him by Lt. Kim Jong Pil who later became his right hand man when he took over the government. Park Chung Hee showed commendable skill in military matters of organising, fighting in adverse conditions (his Assault In Snow is still an authority on the subject) and consolidation. He laid great stress on discipline but at the same time looked to the welfare of his soldiers.

Park Chung Hee was a tough military man but deeply religious and a loving father also. It is said that on the fateful night of the military take over he had helped his children finish their homework, put them to bed after kissing them 'goodnight' and it was only then that the General left his house to quietly accomplish what was uppermost on his mind that night. The military take over was peaceful and smooth as every one knows.

He was supposed to be a good orator and could rank among the best professional writers. He wrote a number of books among which are the famous Leadership In The Midst Of The Revolutionary Process; *Peoples Path To The Fulfilment Of Revolutionary Tasks; Our Nation's Path; To Build A Nation ; The Country—The Revolution And I; The Way Of Leader*

and the latest *Korea Reborn* etc.

Nobody imagined that President Park would meet his end at the hands of an old friend. He had become more controversial in his last years because he was firm and a man of action. Intolerant KCIA Chief had his revenge betraying his master. Park has died but what he has achieved for Korea during his 18 years at the helm was fondly remembered by a grateful nation which paid him rich tearful tributes. He is indeed the builder of post-War Korea !

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Re-unification: Dream or Reality ?

EVERY DIVIDED nation yearns for re-unification. India-Pakistan, East and West Germany, North and South Korea. North and South Vietnam have achieved it but with questionable armed action and an aftermath of it is what is commonly called the 'Boat People Tragedy'. Such things could be in order when the country (Vietnam) was divided but even after unification things are happening. But that is another story, not the subject matter of this chapter, this book.

India and Pakistan ! It is a pity that the two were divided at all resulting in the killing of hundreds of thousands and uprooting of millions, on either side. Still the results of the division are evident. There have been three full scale wars and who knows what is in store for us both. Unfortunately there are very few in Pakistan—in the middle and upper order of society and bureaucracy—who speak about re-unification. There are certainly many, many among the lower strata of services and the common people who yearn for re-unification. In India the irony is whoever wants or speaks about re-unification is branded a communalist, believer in *Akhand Bharat* (one India), an RSS man and what have you ! But that also is another

topic, not for this book.

In Korea, in the two halves of Korea, I presume there is an equal urge for re-unification of the country. None will quarrel with that. The only difference that seems to be surfacing from time to time is that while the South calls for peaceful unification and a dialogue towards it the North does not respond. Only on a few occasions it had, but soon had second thoughts and abandoned whatever little was achieved by those contacts. The reasons are not far to seek.

I have personal knowledge of scenes where the North Koreans were the guests of the South. It was a Red Cross delegation invited to talk about the humanitarian issues like locating the separated families, facilitating exchange of letters between them and allied matters. There were flowers and smiles all the way for the North Korean Red Cross delegates when they arrived in Seoul. The scene of departure was different—rather indifferent—as the representatives from the North had indulged in only political propaganda on the Korean TV. They did not tackle any humanitarian issue ; the only issue before them was to prove their personal bonafides to their government by praising their leader Kim II Sung. The result was the South Koreans were disillusioned and did not give a hearty send off—they did not turn hostile because of their discipline and call by their leaders—but certainly became indifferent and un-enthusiastic towards their un-reasonable northern brothers.

I am told that not two Red Cross delegations from the North were the same, they need not be, but the reason why changes were made was astonishing. It was that the ones who had seen with their own eyes prosperity of the South, and the free atmosphere in the other half of non-Communist Korea, were pleasantly shocked. Their impressions and reactions must have betrayed them

to their big brothers on their return. The visit must have exploded a myth about poverty, filth, frustration in the South created by the North Korean Communists and their leadership. Now how could the same people be sent for another round of talks ? They must not be exposed again to the South Koreans who must have 'brainwashed' them ? So, new people came and soon rounds of discussions were stopped—those talks did not suit the designs of the North Koreans—they did not fit into their scheme of things and had no further propaganda value for them. On the contrary the 'other side' was gaining, hence the discontinuance of the dialogue. Now the separated families have to remain apart, they could not get the light to exchange letters ; travel to the South remains forbidden.

I remember a very graphic account given by a fellow journalist on this issue. He had started with this tell tale account : 'A South Korean high official walks in broad daylight towards the North with a mission—to talk to the North Korean President Kim Il Sung to explore the possibilities of a dialogue between the two halves. Another man crosses into South Korea in the dark, through the thick forests and high mountains—also with a mission—to take part in a conspiracy to murder the South Korean President Park Chung Hee'.

This is the difference between the two approaches !

This does not have to be the difference between countries divided by powerful foreign powers for their own ends.

This can only come about if you refuse to play into the hands of one or more outsiders and start seeing your own interests with your own eyes.

The unfortunate things that have happened in Korea and are even now allowed to continue must give sleepless nights to well-meaning thinkers and peace-loving people. Disregarding the UN Commissions the

Reds saw to it that the country was divided. They kept a half of it under their control and then tried to invade and re-unify Korea by force. That was an attempt which nearly succeeded. Then the Chinese also joined this old and shameful game of divide and rule, and now the talks cannot be held between the two partners because they do not serve any of the Communist interests. If the two Koreas re-unite the outsiders will no longer be required, or allowed, to poke their nose in the affairs of a unified, strong and peaceful Korea. It will neither be a spring-board for action by some other power against some third power nor will it present a testing ground for the newer and newer weapons of one or more super powers. So the division must continue and no contacts be made.

Time and again the South Korean government invited the North Koreans for a dialogue, for a non-aggression pact and to work for re-unification by peaceful means. The late President Park Chung Hee offered a three-stage contact and unification proceedings with which no well-meaning person could have any disagreement. They were : a non-aggression agreement for preservation of peace, resumption of the dialogue, opening of the doors for free visits and contacts between families ; and unification based on free and fair general elections throughout the Korean Peninsula under fair election management and supervision and in direct proportion to the indigenous population.

This was announced by the President on the National Day, August 15, 1974. The response from the North was cold-war overtures, infiltrations, violations of cease-fire agreements, murders at the DMZ Truce line at Panmunjom, constructions of tunnels for transportation of troops and rhetorics at every conceivable forum.

Re-unification of the two Koreas is a necessity, a desire and a must if you have to eliminate all chances

of tension, strife and mutual hatred and want to foster goodwill among nations. It can be obtained. It can be achieved without bloodshed, there should be goodwill of course on both the sides—and a burning desire to talk over the problems. There are no problems that cannot be solved by talking to each other. The question is when will the other side realise it? When will the other side put the interests of the people and the nation over and above that of the ruling coterie, party and international Communism? These are the questions for which there are answers. The first need is a genuine desire to rise above extraneous considerations. One may argue that in cold politics these saintly sentiments are misplaced but can one deny their imperative need? However, the outlook does not seem to be bright as the hand behind the impasse does not give the green signal, or is it waiting to be pushed aside? Let the North Koreans decide about it!

The South Koreans feel that the first thing that the North Koreans could do is to agree to a dialogue and the former President could do no better than suggest 'At Any Time, At Any Place, and At Any Level.' Addressing his New Year Press Conference President Park had given the above slogan and had said on January 19, 1979 that 'The responsible authorities of the South and the North meet without any pre-conditions to discuss directly any and all matters raised by both the sides.'

With the above offer President Park had in fact laid all his cards on the table, and by implication, offered to have a meeting at the level of the two Presidents. It was praised, and rightly so, by the world press and leaders as a bold and realistic step by the South Korean government but the response from the North was at best 'vague, evasive and non-committal.' They suggested a 'whole nation conference' whatever that

may mean. A dialogue can only be between the persons and parties who can take a decision and have the authority to implement it. This 'whole nation conference, for all that I understand could be a public meeting of stray persons capable of raising hands on certain issues without the authority to decide and carry anything except their own bulk to their homes.

The North Koreans did want to proceed towards the working level conference of representatives of the South and the North, of political parties and social organisations, even leaders of Korean residents in foreign countries. North Korea was even prepared to issue invitations for such a conference to organisations in the South as well as to the organisations in other foreign countries. This was totally impractical. First, what authority will the leaders of social organisations and that of the Koreans in foreign countries have to decide anything on behalf of government? Secondly how could the North invite representatives of the organisations in the South and abroad; surely they must be thinking about certain individuals and organisations friendly to them. Certainly this is no way to respond to a sincere offer to talk and take a decision on all outstanding issues between the two governments. This was obvious that the North was not interested in a sincere effort to work out a solution of the problem and come to an agreed basis for unification by peaceful means.

The old proverb in my country is that you can wake up a sleeping man but not the one who is just pretending to be asleep. The situation seems to be the same when the North Koreans do not want—or are prevented by the big brother—to come to the conference table. They sometimes pretend that they want to do so.

Surely this is no way to unify the country peacefully.

Time and again the South Korean side, the Red Cross and the late President proposed to the North Koreans to come forward for a meeting, a dialogue, a contact to settle or even to discuss issues that the two countries are faced with. As late as the middle of August 1979 South Korean Red Cross Chief and the then President of the Republic both proposed to the North Koreans a meeting. They even fixed the date, time and venue of the meeting. It was again a historic occasion when a firm meeting was proposed ; the South asked the North Koreans to resume the hot line between Seoul and Pyongyang snapped unilaterally by North Korea some three years back.

President of the Republic of Korea Red Cross, Mr Lee Ho, proposed on August 11, this year, that a meeting between the South-North Red Cross be held on September 20 at Panmunjom and that the direct telephone line be resumed. It is strictly on humanitarian grounds that the South proposed the meeting irrespective of ideology, or administrative set-up. The idea and the wish of the South was to pave the way for a contact between the ten million separated families. Mr Ho had even announced the names of the delegates to prove his genuine and earnest desire to open the dialogue to end the deadlock.

A few days later the then President of the Republic of Korea, Park Chung Hee, in his Liberation Day eve address, on August 14, called upon the North Korean government to come forward to the conference table. Earlier also the President had suggested direct talks. He did not forget the reluctance on the part of the North for bilateral talks and so proposed a tripartite conference with the United States also. North Korea had insisted on a conference with the US only and wanted to conclude a peace treaty with that country only disregarding South Korea. It was a deliberate

attempt to bypass the major partner, South Korea, in any future settlement of the Korean question as if it did not exist. It was just an excuse for not coming to the conference table. Not surprisingly, the conference did not come off.

The President of Korea had this dig at the North Korean attitude of not talking to the South but to have a treaty with the United States : 'When the North Koreans started the Southern invasion did they really mean to attack the United States and not the Republic of Korea ?' It is more than self-evident that the tragic Korean War of 1950-53 was touched off by their surprise attack on the Republic of Korea.

Any well-meaning person will readily agree that if there is a genuine desire to solve problems—big or small—one must have no objection to talk about them. If one is sincere and genuinely peace-loving one will welcome any move for negotiations. The Republic of Korea, as any other country interested in solution of problems, will readily accept the idea of settling them or to make an effort to settle them as best as possible at least step-by-step. No one would hope that after years of war and yet many more years of tension there would be a settlement between the two Koreas at once but a step-by-step solution can certainly be sought and worked for. That will not only establish peace in the area but will also eliminate the apprehension of two brothers trying to kill each other. The most unfortunate fact of the Korean War was, and is, that the same people, of the same country, speaking the same language are at daggers drawn. Just imagine if the two Koreas again become one what a formidable nation it will be, just like India and Pakistan. The might of unified Korea will be a bulwark for peace and the hardworking Koreans will turn their re-unified nation into a tremendously prosperous country. North has

more area, more natural resources but lacks industrial and technological expertise and capital which the South has in abundance.

They say that North Korea is non-aligned and does not have any military pact with any of the super powers. This may be alright on paper but can anyone forget that China is among the Big Five in the United Nations and the Chinese troops in an astonishingly large number—over a hundred and fifty thousand—did fight in the Korean War on behalf of the North Koreans. China then was a close ally of the USSR and the Russians themselves were solidly behind the North Koreans. In fact it was the USSR which successfully prevented the UN Commission's entry to the North by crossing the 38th parallel and to hold elections in the whole of Korea. Those elections could not have only truly liberated the entire Peninsula but would also have united the country. China and Russia combined to oppose the UN Command along with the North Koreans under Kim Il Sung. In circumstances like that it may be open to anyone to challenge the North Korean non-alignment. It is not free from military arrangements with the big powers but then the propagandists would like to fool all the people all the time. They may not succeed as their predecessors have not is another point.

The fact that the North Koreans, ever since the Armistice, have been sending infiltrators is beyond doubt. Is there any incident of a similar nature in the North where the South Korean hand could be seen or alleged? It is so obvious that aggression was from the other side, the infiltrations have been from the other side and the sabre-rattling is also done from the other side. It is not proper to say that there was a civil war inside South Korea. It is fantastic to suggest that the incidents that had taken place in Seoul, at Panmunjom

and other places against the government, the Americans and the UN Command have all been engineered and carried out by the South Koreans. Who would believe that sort of non-sense? A Democratic and Peoples Republic of Korea (North Korea) is there in name but does it care for people or democracy? Do separated families and suffering citizens not constitute a people?

Who is to reply?

The North Koreans have not reconciled to the situation where about half the Peninsula remains out of their control. One cannot have any quarrel if through a free and fair election a Communist government is established in the entire Korean land but that should not be done without the direct concurrence of the people. As it is Korea was divided without consultation with the people, no country has been divided with the consent of the people. Let the entire matter go before the Korean people in the North and in the South, without interference from outside, and in a systematic free and fair manner—it could be supervised by any impartial agency—the matter could be thrashed up. Obviously that will not be acceptable to the North because of its implications and chances of utter rout of the authoritarian Communist regime. For that matter nowhere in the world Communist parties have captured power in a peaceful, democratic manner.

That the North is not interested in the above and is frantically trying to force its ideology down the throats of the common people of the Korean Peninsula and bring about re-unification by resorting to tactics other than democratic, peaceful and acceptable to the large majority of the people is evident from the preparation of war they have made since the Korean Armistice was signed in 1953. Nine days after the truce was signed Kim II Sung told the North Korean Communist Party's Central Committee (The Workers Party): 'We must

make the most of the time of peace earned by truce in consolidating the Northern base, not only for our own security but also for unification of all Korea.'

Certainly this is not the way to unify a country. Many other divided countries can also think in those terms but would it be proper in a civilised, law-abiding world? There are certain norms in a tension-filled world of today also and it must be the bounden duty of everyone to see that the tension is eased and calmer atmosphere prevailed to help settle all the problems amicably. There should not be any cause for a conflict anywhere.

Withdrawal of all US forces from South Korea and dissolution of the UN Command in Korea, these two form the core of the North Korean demands. They will not think beyond these two. Everyone remembers or should certainly remember what happened when on the assurance of the Russians the United States withdrew its forces a little before the Korean War and the result was the invasion of the South by North Korean troops aided and backed by the Russians, and later, by the Chinese. Everyone wants to have its hold over its neighbours and expand its area of influence; the United States could not be an exception. The significant factor, however, to be remembered, is that the United States has not been a colonialist power, at least not in this century; they withdrew from Japan and the Philippines as soon as it was possible and feasible keeping in view the security commitments with their allies. If in the Korean case the Americans withdraw and the UN Command, existing only technically, is finally dissolved there would be a recurrence of the 1950 events—with just one difference that the Republic of Korea is not what it was then. The North Koreans will certainly have a try to fulfil their desire to unify the country by force or to have a regime planted in the South which

also will fall in line with the aims of World Communism. The most tragic thing is that in a Peoples Democracy the casualties right from the beginning are the People and Democracy. The oft-quoted saying remains true: Man Does Not Live By Bread Alone !

Unification has become an extremely difficult thing these days of big power rivalries and narrow self-interests but given sincerity and the will to stop playing into the hands of the interested powers the two countries can make a serious start. In Korea, surprisingly, whatever was started in 1972 came to naught the next year and even the telephone links snapped by the North in 1976.

This has been the standard practice of the Communists everywhere. They have tremendous patience and they can keep on waiting for a long time, making their preparations, continue with their propaganda machine and pounce upon the opportunity whenever it comes their way. They have succeeded in their motives and have outwitted many on the conference tables also as what they say at the talks need not be carried out in the field. Their strategy varies and can be moulded according to the exigencies of the situation. In India they have been supporting Mrs Gandhi during the Emergency and later had denounced her. They may come near her again. I have no quarrel with them as both, the Communist Party of India and Mrs Gandhi, have shown how utterly unreliable both can be, but, that is a separate story worth a new book which others, more knowledgeable scholars, will write one day.

The North Koreans have been clamouring for a dialogue with the United States. As recently as July 1, 1979 President Carter of the US and President Park of Korea had jointly proposed a meeting of both North and South Korea and the US to seek means to promote a dialogue and reduce tension in the Korean

Peninsula. This was done in the joint communique issued at the conclusion of President Carter's visit to the Republic of Korea on July 1 this year. Said the Communique (in Parts) : the two foreign ministers (of Korea and the US) should communicate jointly with the foreign minister of North Korea in an appropriate manner with a view to convene a meeting of the official representatives of the three countries. On June 30th itself the Soviet Union and Mainland China were informed that the Republic of Korea and the United States were making this initiative. A similar notification was made to Pyongyang on July 1st through a third country's ambassador in North Korea.

It was made clear to everyone that the main role in the proposed meeting will only be played by the two Koreas, the US will only be participating as a 'coordinator,' it is not a three-party meeting. The two Presidents shared the view that admission of both North and South Korea to UN as an interim measure pending ultimate unification of the divided countries should be attempted. This will provide both the sides with broader opportunities for a dialogue to resolve their differences.

President Carter expressed his great admiration for Korea's remarkable record of achievement in sustained economic development under the leadership of President Park Chung Hee in the face of various obstacles and adverse conditions, thus offering a model and inspiration for other countries as an example of economic growth and equity.

The US Government and the South Koreans have been trying for a proper dialogue with the North Koreans but without success so far. Inspite of divergent ideologies the so-called anti-Communist world wanted to have a dialogue with the so-called Democratic and Peoples State but, in vain. The late President Park in

the dinner speech at the state banquet for President Carter had said very clearly that the North Korean Communists are implacably pursuing their military build-up, whereas the Republic of Korea, nevertheless, has opened wide its doors on the basis of the principle of reciprocity, to all nations of the world including those who have ideologies and institutions different from Korea.

That is the best example of peaceful co-existence. It is a pity that the country which has managed to become a member of the non-aligned movement that supports co-existence and co-operation feels shy of showing the same attitude towards its closest neighbour, a part of its own.

That unmistakably, is the difference between the two approaches.

The Armistice authorities have compiled the figures of provocations and violations of the Armistice by the North Koreans. The North will certainly deny but the fact remains that the number arrived at not by the South Koreans but also by the UN Command is a staggering figure, almost four a day. Till 1976 the figure was a 'mere' 35,000. Since then, for a period, the number rose by 30% making it more than 17 violations a day. A record indeed !

No doubt the South Koreans also have been strengthening their defence capabilities but as is evident from facts and inference that there is absolutely no likelihood of a South Korean invasion of the North. Call it the reluctance to invite the Russians or the Chinese, pressure of world public opinion or likely impact on a booming economy, South Korea just can not think of invading the North. The same cannot be said about the North Koreans and here lies the point : Who is for peaceful contacts, bilateral or multi-lateral talks and ultimate unification of the two Koreas

peacefully? Take for instance the speech of Kim II Sung in Peking in April 1975 when on a visit there: 'We shall not sit idly by if revolution occurs in the South. In this war what we shall loose will be the truce line and what we shall gain will be national unification.'

Even if one concedes the point that theoretically there can be an uprising in a democracy and can assume bigger proportions, is any other country—or a separate administration—entitled to interfere in the affairs of the other country? If that design is not checked then I am afraid it can be repeated anywhere in the world. We have to see that it shall not happen.

The pattern of social and cultural life in two Koreas differs considerably as it should between a close, controlled society and a liberal democratic one. The social controls should not be applied in such a way as to hammer the society into a set pattern, conforming to the wish of the coterie of individuals who emerge somehow to take charge of everything. They are at times propped up by outsiders as is being done on a small scale in India also. The so-called leftists at the behest and propping of an outside power are out to sow the seeds of disruption and to step-by-step capture power by de-stabilising the situation. People acquire pecuniary, personal or ideological commitments to International Communism which today has been reduced to another form of expansionism and colonialism.

A trend was visible during the 19 months of Emergency in India when professional bodies and occupational associations were formed and encouraged to toe a particular coterie of rulers. The word 'committed' gained currency and all sorts of commitments were exhibited, obviously for gains other than national. No one should have any arbitrary control over the lives

of the other members of the society. This is what is happening in Korea, North of the 38th parallel. Personality cult was being pushed in India during Emergency and even after by the same coterie. The same is being done in North Korea since long. This is far from the letter and spirit of democracy.

This is the situation I find today in the world, in the Korean Peninsula and nearer home which can raise hopes or shatter them. Given sagacity, farsight, and an independence of judgement the dream of Korean unification could be translated into reality. On the other hand if narrow outlook, other outside influences and hollow ideological considerations prevail the long cherished desire of the Korean people will remain no more than a dream.

Epilogue

KOREA OF today is absolutely different from Korea of 1950 and even of the 1970. I saw it in the sixties and saw it again in the seventies and there was a striking change one cannot miss. It is not my point that milk and honey flow in the Republic of Korea and that everyone has more than plenty, but, all I can say is that today's Korea is well fed, well looked after, educated and looks forward to the future with confidence and optimism. The average Korean child is not only healthier but taller than his ancestors. He is exposed to progressive trends and achievements in science and technology, in improved methods of agriculture and fisheries.

Private cars in Korea may not be anywhere the number in some of the affluent countries in the West but even the Korean middle and fairly well-off classes prefer a bus ride because public transportation is frequent, cheap and convenient, without any problem for parking in a busy place.

Seoul has quite a congested life with narrow lanes and small houses, also. Some streets are not as wide as the others and inspite of the opening of quite a few segments of the sub-way, traffic is ever increasing.

Inflation is raising its ugly head and imports are also up, for valid reasons though, but efforts are on to check the two and keep them under control.

Seoul is crowded and yet retains its warmth, and importance in various fields of activity—political, social, economic and cultural. Seoul is not the whole Korea, it is a part of the whole and so reflects the fruits of hard work, dedication, and optimism of the entire nation. True, things have not improved in the countryside as fast, or as much, as they should have been—for human nature is ever unsatisfied—but the redeeming feature of all this is that the march is in the right direction. The march is steady, full of confidence and hopes for a bright future. Given peace, the march will surely result in better goals achieved in lesser and lesser time.

Even the present is something to be immensely proud of inspite of many handicaps. The Korean War had taken a heavy toll of lives and property. Three times the Capital city, Seoul, was lost and reduced to rubble but sheer dedication and hard work has transformed it beyond recognition. The imposing skyline of Seoul reminds me of the Phoenix rising from the ashes as it were—if Berlin in Germany could become the new Phoenix of the West, Seoul is just that of the Orient. Originally it had much less dependable industrial base, got less of foreign aid, and had more of internal and external problems. In less than twenty years Seoul has soared high from the ashes of the Korean War and now symbolizes Korea, a new Korea. The new Korean determination is visible to forge ahead challenging everyone who dares to defy it, competing with everyone who enters the race for peace, progress and prosperity. True, El Dorado has not been reached but the road to it, I am sure, has been sighted. That is something great and remarkable indeed !

I wish everyone, specially in the developing world, to emulate the example of the Republic of Korea in courage, devotion and dedication !

APPENDICES

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General Assembly Resolution 195(III) December 12, 1948

The Problem of the Independence of Korea

The General Assembly,

Having regard to its resolution 112(II) of 14 November 1947 concerning the problem of the Independence of Korea.

Having considered the report of the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (hereinafter referred to as the Temporary Commission) and the report of the Interim Committee of the General Assembly regarding its consultation with the Temporary Commission.

Mindful of the fact that, due to difficulties referred to in the report of the Temporary Commission, the objectives set forth in the resolution of 14 November 1947 have not been fully accomplished, and in particular that unification of Korea has not yet been achieved.

1. Approves the conclusions of the reports of the Temporary Commission;

2. Declares that there has been established a lawful government (the Government of the Republic of Korea) having effective control and jurisdiction over that of Korea where the Temporary Commission was able to observe and consult and in which the great majority of the people of all Korea reside; that this Government is based on elections which were a valid expression of the free will of the electorate of that part of Korea and which were observed by the Temporary Commission: and that this is the only such Government in Korea;

3. Recommends that the Occupying Powers should withdraw their occupying forces from Korea as early as practicable;

4. Resolves that, as a means to the full accomplishment of the objectives set forth in the resolution of 14 November 1947, a Commission on Korea consisting of Australia, China, El Salvador, France, India, the Philippines and Syria, shall be established to continue the work of the Temporary Commission and carry out the provision of the present resolution, having in mind the status of the Government of Korea as herein defined, and in particular to;

(a) Lend its good offices to bring about the unification of Korea and the integration of all Korean security forces in accordance with the principles laid down by the General Assembly in the resolution of 14 November 1947.

(b) Seek to facilitate the removal of barriers to economic, social and other friendly intercourse caused by the division of Korea;

(c) Be available for observation and consultation in the further development of representative government based on the freely expressed will of the people;

(d) Observe actual withdrawal of the occupying forces and verify the fact of withdrawal when such has; and for this purpose, if it is so desirous, request the assis-

tance of military experts of the two occupying Powers;

5. Decides that the Commission:

(a) Shall, within thirty days of the adoption of the present resolution, proceed to Korea, where it shall maintain its seat;

(b) Shall be regarded as having superseded the Temporary Commission established by the resolution of 14 November 1947;

(c) Is authorized to travel, consult and observe throughout Korea;

(d) Shall determine its own procedures;

(e) May consult with the Interim Committee with respect to the discharge of its duties in the light of developments, and within the term of the present resolution;

(f) Shall render a report to the next regular session of the General Assembly which might be called to consider the subject matter of the present resolution, and shall render such interim reports as it may deem appropriate to the Secretary General for distribution to Members;

6. Requests that the Secretary General shall provide the Commission with adequate staff and facilitate including technical advisors as required; and authorizes the Secretary-General to pay the expenses and per diem to a representative and alternate from each of the States Members of the Commission;

7. Calls upon the Member States concerned, the Government of the Republic of Korea and all Koreans to afford every assistance and facility to the Commission in the fulfilment of its responsibilities;

8. Calls upon Member States to refrain from any acts derogatory to the results achieved and to be achieved by the United Nations in bringing about the complete independence and unity of Korea;

9. *Recommends that Member States and other nations, in establishing their relations with the Govern-*

ment of the Republic of Korea, take into consideration the facts set out in paragraph 2 of the present resolution.

Adopted at 18th Plenary Meeting,
12 December 1948.

Voting Result

In Favour (48)	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, United States, Uruguay, Peru, Venezuela, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Norway, Luxembourg, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Union of South Africa, Iraq, Lebanon, UAR, Yemen, Syria, Ethiopia, Liberia, Afghanistan, Burma, China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, Turkey.
Against (6)	Byelo-Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Ukraine, USSR, Yugoslavia.
Abstaining (1)	Sweden
Absent (3) :	Guatemala, Panama, Saudi Arabia

Full Text of the 'South-North Joint Communiqué' May 5, 1972

RECENTLY, THERE were talks held both in Seoul and Pyongyang to discuss ways to improve south-north relations and to unify the divided fatherland.

Director of the Central Intelligence Agency Lee Hu Rak of Seoul visited Pyongyang from May 2 to 5, 1972, to hold talks with Director of the Organization and Guidance Department Kim Young Joo of Pyongyang. In return, Second Vice-Premier Park Sung Chul visited Seoul from May 29 through June 1, 1972, as a proxy for Director Kim Young Joo and held talks with Director Lee Hu Rak.

In these talks, the two sides, bearing in mind their common aspiration to achieve the peaceful unification of the fatherland as early as possible, exchanged views in an openhearted manner and succeeded in promoting mutual understanding to a substantial degree.

In the course of the talks, the two sides, in an effort to dissipate misunderstanding and mistrust, and mitigate mounting tension resulting from the long division of the country and, furthermore, to expedite unification of the fatherland, agreed as follows :

1. The two sides agreed on the following principles for unification of the fatherland :

First, unification shall be achieved independently, without either depending on foreign forces or being subjected to interference by foreign forces.

Second, unification shall be achieved through peaceful means, without resorting to the use of arms against one another.

Third, a great national unity shall first be sought as a single nation, transcending differences in thought, ideologies and systems.

2. In order to ease tension and promote an atmosphere of mutual trust between them, the two sides agreed to stop abusing and slandering one another, to refrain from undertaking armed provocation against one another whether on a large or small scale, and to take positive measures to prevent inadvertent military incidents.

3. The two sides agreed to implement many-sided exchanges in various fields in an effort to restore severed national ties, to promote mutual understanding and to expedite an independent and peaceful unification.

4. The two sides agreed to cooperate positively with each other for an early and successful conclusion of the South-North Red Cross Conference, which is currently in progress amidst the fervent expectations of the entire people of Korea.

5. The two sides agreed to install and operate a direct telephone line between Seoul and Pyongyang with a view to preventing unexpected military incidents and to cope directly, promptly and accurately, with problems arising from relations between the south and the north.

6. The two sides agreed to set up and operate the South-North Coordinating Committee, with Director Lee Hu Rak and Director Kim Young Joo designated as Co-chairmen, in order to implement the aforementioned

agreements, improve inter-Korean relations through resolution of all problems that may arise between them and resolve the question of unifying the country on the basis of the agreed principles for unification of the fatherland.

7. The two sides solemnly pledge before the entire nation to faithfully observe the agreements listed above, firmly believing that the agreements correspond with the common aspirations of the entire people of Korea eager for the early unification of the fatherland.

Upholding the wishes of their respective superiors.

Lee Hu Rak
(signed)

Kim Young Joo
(signed)



**Full Text of the 'Agreement on Formation
and Operation of the South-North
Coordinating Committee'
November 4, 1972**

THE TWO sides have agreed on formation and operation of the South-North Coordinating Committee as follows :

1. The SNCC shall be formed and operated with the aim of implementing the agreements in the South-North Joint Communique of July 4, 1972, improving the relations between the South and the North, undertaking cooperative activities in various fields and, finally, resolving the question of unifying the country based on the agreed principles for unification of the fatherland.

2. The function of the SNCC shall be as follows :

(a) To discuss and settle the question of achieving an independent and peaceful unification of the country based on the agreed principles for unification of the fatherland, and to ensure implementation of agreements reached.

(b) To discuss and settle the question of effecting a wide range of political exchanges among political parties, social organizations and individuals in the South and the North and to ensure implementation of agreement reached.

(c) To discuss and settle the question of facilitating economic, cultural and social exchanges and cooperation

between the south and the north, and to ensure implementation of agreements reached.

(d) To discuss and settle the question of easing tensions, preventing military incidents and dissolving the state of military confrontation between the South and the north, and to ensure implementation of agreements reached.

(e) To discuss and settle the question of taking joint steps in the conduct of overseas activities by the South and the North as a means to enhance national pride as a single nation, and to ensure implementation of agreements reached.

3. The SNCC shall be organized as follows :

(a) The SNCC shall be composed of one Co-chairman, one Vice-Chairman, one Executive Member and two Members respectively from each side. The number of members may be increased when deemed necessary. Director Lee Hu Rak of the Central Intelligence Agency and Director Kim Young Joo of the Organization and Guidance Department are hereby appointed as Co-chairmen. Vice-Chairmen, Executive Members and Members shall be of ministerial or vice-ministerial rank and shall be appointed respectively by the Co-chairmen after prior consultation.

(b) An Executive Council shall be created within the SNCC. The Executive Council, when so authorized by the Co-chairmen of the two sides, shall be charged with the mission of discussing and settling all problems that arise while the SNCC is in recess, and with ensuring implementation of agreements reached. The Executive Council shall be composed of the SNCC Executive Member and two Executive Secretaries respectively from each side.

(c) The SNCC shall have five Sub-committees—Political, Military, Foreign Affairs, Economic, and Cultural—with each of them to be created in accordance

with progress made in the SNCC. The functions and formation of the five Sub-committees shall be governed by rules to be worked out between the two sides separately.

(a) The SNCC shall have a Joint Secretariat located in Panmunjom. Each side shall appoint a Co-director of the Joint Secretariat, together with a necessary number of personnel to assist them.

4. The SNCC shall be operated as follows :

(a) The SNCC shall make it a principle to hold plenary meetings alternately in Seoul and Pyongyang. It may hold plenary meetings in Panmunjom when deemed necessary.

(b) The SNCC shall hold plenary meetings once every two to three months, with the Executive Council meeting once every month. The SNCC may hold special plenary meetings as deemed necessary through mutual agreement.

(c) The SNCC shall hold meetings either in public or behind closed doors.

(d) A necessary number of specialists and Joint Secretariat personnel may attend the SNCC plenary meetings as well as Executive Council meetings, when so agreed by the two sides.

(e) The agreements reached at the SNCC shall take effect when the Co-chairmen of the two sides put their signatures on them. The two sides shall announce the agreements simultaneously through the Joint Secretariat through mutual agreement.

(f) The SNCC shall work out separately detailed rules of procedure to govern its operation.

5. This agreement may be revised and/or supplemented through mutual agreement.

6. This agreement shall come into force when the two sides possess an original text of this Agreement made in duplicate and signed by each of them.

Done on November 4, 1972, in Pyongyang.

For the Seoul side:

Director Lee Hu Rak, SNCC Co-chairman (signed)

For the Pyongyang side :

Director Kim Young Joo, SNCC Co-chairman

(signed by Park Sung Chul on behalf of Kim Young Joo).

IV

Henry Kissinger's Speech of 22nd July 1976

ON THE Korean Peninsula, too, we are prepared to make serious efforts to ease tensions.

In recent years North Korea and its friends have mounted a major diplomatic campaign—especially in the so-called non-aligned forums and the United Nations—to alter the institutional arrangements of the armistic agreement which ended hostilities in Korea 23 years ago and helps to keep the peace today. They insist upon unconditional dissolution of the United Nations Command, which, together with North Korea and China, is a signatory to the armistice agreement. They have gone so far as to claim that if the command is dissolved, the armistice agreement itself would cease to exist. At the same time, North Korea demand the unilateral withdrawal of American forces from Korea. They propose that the issues of peace and security on the Peninsula be discussed in bilateral talks with the United States alone, excluding the Republic of Korea which represents two-thirds of the Korean population.

North Korea's proposals are designed not to promote peace but to isolate our ally, to precipitate unilateral American withdrawal and to dissolve the

existing legal arrangements into amorphous general negotiations.

The United States will never accept such proposals. No nation that truly believes in peace should support them ; no country interested in genuine non-alignment should lend itself to so one-sided an approach.

We do not maintain that present arrangement in the Korean peninsula must remain forever frozen. On the contrary, the United States favors new negotiations to promote security and to ease tensions there. We are prepared to discuss a new legal basis for the existing armistice. We are also ready to replace the armistice with more permanent arrangements. But this administration cannot, and will not, negotiate behind the back of our South Korean ally over issues which effect its very existence. Nor will the United States agree to terminate the UN Command without new arrangements which preserve the integrity of the armistice agreement—the only existing legal arrangement which commits the parties concerned to keep the peace—or which establish a new permanent legal basis. And the United States will not undermine stability and hopes for negotiation by withdrawing its forces unilaterally. The United States position with respect to Korea is clear :

First we urge a resumption of serious discussions between North and South Korea.

Second, if North Korea's allies are prepared to improve their relations with South Korea, then and only then, will we be prepared to take similar steps toward North Korea.

Third, we continue to support proposals that the United Nations open its doors to full membership for South and North Korea without prejudice to their eventual reunification.

Finally, we are prepared to negotiate a new basis for the armistice or to replace it with more permanent

arrangements in any form acceptable to all the parties.

In this spirit, we proposed last September a conference including North and South Korea, the United States and the People's Republic of China—the parties most immediately concerned—to discuss ways of preserving the armistice agreement and of reducing tensions in Korea. We noted that in such a meeting we would be ready to explore possibilities for a larger conference to negotiate more fundamental and durable arrangements.

Today, President Ford has asked me to call again for such a conference.

Specifically, The United States Government is prepared to meet with South Korea, North Korea and the People's Republic of China during the coming session of the United Nations General Assembly. We propose New York, but we are ready to consider some other mutually agreeable place. We are willing to begin immediate discussions on issues of procedure and site. Such a conference could provide a new legal structure for the armistice if the parties agree. It could replace it with more permanent arrangements. It could ease tensions throughout Asia.

We urge other parties to respond affirmatively. Any nation genuinely interested in peace on the peninsula should be prepared to sit down and talk with the other parties on ways to improve the existing situation.

V

Statement by Mr Tong-jin Park 23rd July 1976

SECRETARY OF State Kissinger of the United States, in his address on July 22, 1976 before the downtown Rotary Club of Seattle and Seattle Chamber of Commerce, has made particular reference to Korea.

While emphasizing the United States commitment to the security of the Republic of Korea, Secretary Kissinger has proposed to convene a conference aimed at negotiating the settlement of outstanding problems on the Korean peninsula among the parties directly concerned during the forthcoming session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York or some other mutually agreeable place. He further indicated that the United States is prepared to begin immediate discussions to arrange such conference.

In order to alleviate current tension on the Korean peninsula and expedite the peaceful unification of Korea, this proposal, we believe, should be given the most serious consideration. The Government of the Republic of Korea and the United States held consultation regarding the proposal.

The United Nations General Assembly has deliberated the Korean question for almost three decades and adopted numerous resolutions.

Yet no fundamental solutions of the Korean question has been brought about. Our long experience shows that no substantial progress can be expected towards the settlement of the Korean problem without the direct talk and the cooperation between the south and the north of Korea.

We are convinced that under the present circumstances the unconditional resumption of the south-north dialogue and the convening of the conference of the parties directly concerned are the most realistic and national approach towards the settlement of outstanding problems on Korea.

It is, therefore, hoped that the Peoples Republic of China and North Korea will give positive response to the proposal made by the United States Secretary of State so that the conference of the four parties concerned could be held as soon as possible.

By taking such a constructive step, we believe, we cannot only reduce tension on the Korean peninsula which is a pre-requisite to the peaceful unification of Korea but also restore mutual trust between the south and the north of Korea set forth as one of the common objectives in the joint communique of July 4, 1972. Moreover, such a constructive approach will help put an end to the sterile and unproductive confrontation between the two opposing parties at the international fora.

VI

South Korea Calls on North Korea for Implementation of July 4, 1979 Spirit

ON THE occasion of the Seventh Anniversary of the issuance of the July 4 South-North Joint Communique, Mr Min Kwan-Shik, Acting Seoul-side Co-Chairman of the South-North Coordinating Committee issued on July 4 (1979) the following statement :

'Seven years ago today, the two sides—the South and the north of Korea—agreed on the historical July 4 South-North Joint Communique, making it public in Seoul and Pyongyang simultaneously.

The basic spirit of the July 4 South-North Joint Communique is, as is described clearly in its preamble, to 'remove the misunderstandings and mistrust and mitigate increased tensions that have arisen between the South and the North as a result of long separation, and further to expedite unification of the fatherland on the basis of the national desire that 'peaceful unification of the fatherland should be achieved at an early date'.

In the South-North Joint Communique, the two sides solemnly pledged before the nation that they will faithfully carry out the seven-point agreed matters contained therein, which include those on realization of unification of the fatherland in an independent and peaceful way to embody the basic spirit of the communique, and establishment and operation of a South-

North Coordinating Committee for the purpose of solving the unification question and various other issues pending between the South and the North.

Pursuant to the express provisions of Article 6 of the South-North Joint Communique, the two sides formed and inaugurated the South-North Coordinating Committee charged with the implementation of dialogue. The 'agreed minute on formation and operation of South-North Coordinating Committee', another important agreement reached between the South and the North, has imposed upon the South-North Coordinating Committee the comprehensive function of discussing and solving, and guaranteeing their implementation problems arising in various fields such as politics, economy, military, diplomacy and culture in the South-North relations in the course of pursuing independent and peaceful unification of the divided fatherland.

However, North Korea, in the so-called 'August 28 statement' issued on August 28, 1973, one-sidedly suspended the operation of the South-North Coordinating Committee, thus openly trampling down upon the July 4 South-North Joint Communique and all other agreed matters between the South and North. Once between the South and North, Vice Co-Chairmen's meetings of the South-North Coordinating Committee were held between the South and the North for the purpose of normalizing the South-North Coordinating Committee. Before long, however, North Korea suspended these meetings, too.

Moreover, North Korea suspended even the South-North Red Cross Conference held with a view to removing the heart-aching pains of the 10 million dispersed family members for humanitarian grounds, and went to the extreme of cutting the direct Seoul-Pyongyang telephone line one-sidedly.

The only way to independent and peaceful unifica-

tion of the fatherland is for South and North Korea to return the basic spirit of the July 4 South-North Joint Communique and reopen the dialogue.

We have made all available endeavors for the resumption of the suspended South-North dialogue.

Nevertheless, North Korea has persisted in a negative attitude. On January 19, 1979, we proposed that the authorities of the South and north have dialogue at any time, any place and at any level without any pre-conditions to discuss various problems raised between the South and North.

This is because only responsible authorities can be responsible for agreement between the two sides and guarantee its implementation.

However, North Korea demanded the convocation of a 'whole nation conference' putting fourth the so-called 'democratic front for unification of the fatherland' and unilaterally denied the existence of the South-North Coordinating Committee, thereby attempting to scrap the July 4 South-North Joint Communique.

In order to find a breakthrough for the resumption of the South-North dialogue, we, through the Joint Communique of the Korea-U.S. Summit meeting issued on July 1, 1979, proposed a meeting of senior official representatives of South and North Korea and the United States.

This proposal was aimed at seeking ways to consider the importance of the South-North dialogue for peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in this region as well as to expedite dialogue and ease tensions based on the spirit of the July 4 joint communique. It is a sincere and realistic proposal stemming from our genuine peace efforts and determination to forestall fratricide and ease tensions between the South and the North and consolidate peace on this land by all means.

On the occasion of the Seventh Anniversary of the issuance of the July 4 South-North Joint Communique today, I wish to emphasize that our side keeps the doors to the resumption of the South-North dialogue wide open.

In order to settle the sufferings of the 10 million family members dispersed on the South and the North, we have made sincere efforts to resume the South-North Red Cross Conference.

We have striven in many ways to normalize the South-North Coordinating Committee. In consideration of North Korean contentions, we even made a proposal for the reorganization of the South-North Coordinating Committee in such a way as to involve political parties and social organizations in the committee.

We also keep doors open to talks between the authorities of the South and North.

Now we open the doors to a meeting of senior official representatives of South and North Korea and the United States for North Korea, and urge North Korea to respond thereto affirmatively.

At to again remind the responsible authorities of North Korea of the proposal for such meeting made jointly by the Republic of Korea and the United States of July 1, 1979, I again urge North Korea to do away with its negative attitude toward the dialogue and return to the forum of dialogue without any further delay.

We look forward to an affirmative response from North Korea.

VII

South Korea's Proposal for Red Cross Conference

SEOUL, Aug. 11. President of the Republic of Korea National Red Cross Lee Ho proposed on August 11th to the North Korean Red Cross to hold the 26th working-level meeting of the South-North Red Cross conference at 10. A.M. on Sept. 20 at the conference room of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission at Panmunjom and to resume the operation of direct telephone line between Seoul and Pyongyang and that of Panmunjom liaison offices from 9. A.M. Sept. 1, (1979) to provide a breakthrough for the stalled South-North Red Cross talks.

Following is the summary of a statement issued by President Lee of the Republic of Korea National Red Cross on the occasion of the eighth anniversary of proposing the South-North Red Cross talks :

The South-North Red Cross talks should be pursued according to the spirit of Red Cross humanitarianism and brotherly love, transcending the differences of systems and ideologies.

Recently, a Korean who was in Red China returned home and sisters in Moscow and Seoul were able to telephone directly to each other. With this in mind, it is very sad that dispersed families in the South and North of Korea do not have any knowledge of even the fate of

their families and relatives.

Eight years have passed since the Republic of Korea National Red Cross (ROKNRC) proposed, on 12 August 1971, the South-North Red Cross talks. I again urge the north Korean side to return to the conference table, amidst the ardent aspiration for reunion of ten million separated family members, and opinion at home and abroad.

I emphasize that the North Korean side should promptly normalize the operation of the direct Seoul-Pyongyang telephone line and of the Panmunjom liaison office which have remained paralyzed for three years since 30 August 1976.

I duly propose to the North Korean side to hold the 26th working-level meeting of the South-North Red Cross conference at the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission conference room at 10 A.M. on 20 September 1979, in order to discuss the normalization of the South-North Red Cross talks. And I request that the North Korean Red Cross Society should normalize the function of the direct telephone line and of the Panmunjom liaison office at 9 A.M. on 1 September 1979.

The Republic of Korea National Red Cross Society again emphasizes that no matter what obstacles might lie in the path of a South-North Red Cross conference, it will continue to make every possible effort, with sincerity and patience, to realize the reunion of ten million separated family members in South and North Korea.

Meanwhile, the Republic of Korea National Red Cross also announced the replacement of some delegates and consultants to the South-North Red Cross conference.

The Republic of Korea National Red Cross Society, 11 August 1979, on the occasion of the 8th anniversary proposing the South-North Red Cross talks, has

re-arranged the line-up of its delegation in preparation for reopening South-North Red Cross talks. The reason why we have replaced some delegates and consultants as well as proposed that resumption of working-level meetings between South and North Red Cross Societies, is to reopen the stalemated talks.

The revised line-up of delegates and consultants represents the ROK Red Cross Society's unceasing efforts to carry out the humanitarian projects. We are confident that this will give momentum to the dead-locked South-North Red Cross talks.

Especially, I would like to emphasize that it is more meaningful to select new consultants to the ROK Red Cross delegation on the basis of vocational ability from every walk of our society and let them broadly participate in the talks.

The names of the delegates and consultants are as follows:

Delegates

Chief Delegate : Soh Sang Yung (remained: Vice President of the Republic of Korea National Red Cross)

Alternate Chief Delegate : Kim Yeon Choo (remained: Assistant to the President of the Republic of Korea National Red Cross)

Delegate : Lee Byung Ho (remained: Director of the Secretariat of the South-North Red Cross conference)

Delegate : Song Han Ho (replaced: Consultant on Public Information to the Republic of Korea National Red Cross)

Delegate : Chung Choo Nyun (remained : Spokesman of the Republic of Korea National Red Cross)

Delegate : Choi Moon Hyun (remained : Consultant on youth to the Republic of Korea National Red Cross)
Consultants

Cho Duk Song : (remained: Editorial writer of the *Chosun Ilbo*)

Park Bong Sik : (remained : Professor of Seoul National University)

Kim Dong Kil : (replaced : Former Professor of Yonsei University)

Park Jo Jun : (replaced : Minister of Yung Nak Church)

Lee Chul Kyung : (replaced: President of the National Council of Women of Korea)

Chung Yong Suk : (replaced : Editorial writer of the *Dong-A Ilbo*)

Han Seung Jo : (replaced : Professor of Korea University)

VIII

President Park's Call

FOLLOWING IS a translation of the text of congratulatory address of President Park Chung Hee for the 34th Liberation Day (1979).

My dear 50-million fellow countrymen.

On this 34th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Fatherland, I join hearts in celebration with everyone of my fellow countrymen at home and abroad, calling to mind the jubilation of that day.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heart-felt commendation and encouragement to all of you who have endeavored strenuously to rebuild the nation overcoming tremendous challenges and trials originating both within Korea and from abroad.

If genuine liberation consists of political independence and autonomy, we are here to assure ourselves once again, on this liberation day, that this generation can successfully fulfil its historic mission through the realization of the unification of the fatherland in peace and prosperity.

In the light of the unwieldy nature of the problems we face resulting from the marked military buildup by the North Koreans, North Korea's negative response to the offer to hold a meeting of senior official representatives of the South and the North of Korea and the United States and the striking blow to our national

economy from the tide of increasing oil prices, we cannot help but contemplate the meaning of this day with renewed will and resolve.

Tragic Division

In our recollection, the joy and jubilation of liberation were quite short-lived. We were to undergo the torment of the tragic division of the fatherland and the ensuing fratricidal war initiated by the invasion of the South by the North Koreans. Provocations by armed north Korean guerrillas were never to cease even after the ceasefire when we were preoccupied with post-war rehabilitation. Amid such a vortex of events, poverty and political and social chaos persisted unabated.

As the situation reached crisis proportions in the early 60s, we resolutely stood up to restore order and to uproot poverty. Further with the coming of the 70s, we made a crucial decision to put the October revitalizing reforms into effect in order to more effectively meet the challenge of the rapidly changing situations surrounding the country.

With the strength of national coherence and creative wisdom replenished, we have succeeded in attaining political stability and achieving striking strides in the growth and development of the national security, economy, society and culture. This accomplishment is not only the crystallization of the priceless perspiration of this generation but also the culmination of a great victory for the Korean people who rose to fulfil the unflagging potential of the nation chronicled throughout a history dotted with many ordeals, both internal and external.

Now we are at the threshold of the promising 80s which behoves us to call on our accumulated reserve of strength and wisdom in order to ultimately win peace

and prosperity, making an epochal advance toward genuine liberation.

Adult Nation

My dear fellow countrymen,

In the generation since the day of liberation, the world has undergone considerable change and we have also become an adult nation standing on our own in a near-miraculous growth, both materially and spiritually. To that extent, our national strength has grown.

However, one deplorable fact remaining still untangled is that our people and land are still divided. The North Koreans are continuing a reckless military buildup to fulfill the daydream of communizing the South by military means and thereby they obstruct the prosperity and well being of the nation in opposition to our ethnic cultural tradition. Even at this very moment, they are engaged in digging tunnels under the ceasefire line in preparation for a southward invasion.

Recently, our police and naval forces intercepted and sank a North Korean armed espionage ship which attempted to infiltrate deep into the southern coastal sea under the disguise of a fishing boat. The North Koreans are still dreaming of repeating criminal mistake of the Korean War.

Following our repeated calls in the past for the resumption of the South-North talks, we again proposed early this year a South-North dialogue between the responsible authorities of both sides. Quite recently, we also offered jointly with the United States to hold tripartite talks, but they are turning a deaf ear on us reiterating their previous offer for a peace agreement with the United States.

Quest for Peace

Then, I would like to elicit an answer from them to my earnest question: 'When the North Koreans started the southern invasion in 1950, did they really mean to attack the United States, not the Republic of Korea?' it is more than self-evident that the tragic Korean War of 1950 was touched off by their surprise attack on the Republic of Korea. Ever since for nearly a generation, there has existed a precarious ceasefire between the South and the north.

Now is the time we have to change the current instability into a lasting peace, and further to pursue the peaceful unification of the fatherland through exchanges and cooperation between the South and the North. If they persistently refuse to talk or negotiate with us at this juncture, I cannot but question whether their designs are in fact insidious wondering with whom they intend to discuss the South-North questions, apart and aside from us. Why do they repeatedly decline our humanitarian offers to reunite the members of divided families and our proposals for economic exchanges to enhance the wellbeing and prosperity of all Koreans both South and North? What are they afraid of? If they decline to hold a dialogue with us while they continue to talk about peaceful unification, we cannot help but conclude that they are actually making public their hidden intention to pursue unification by military means.

Nevertheless, we want peace, No matter how ardent our aspiration for national unification may be, we never want war or unification by violent means. Therefore, a South-North dialogue must come first to open the way to wide-ranging exchanges and cooperation.

It was out of our deep devotion to the cause of dialogue that a few days ago, on the 8th anniversary of

our proposal to hold South-North Red Cross talks, we again proposed to reopen the long interrupted talks for the reunion of divided families.

On this occasion, I call upon North Korea anew to come forward to the table of South-North Red Cross talks and to accept our offer either for talks between responsible authorities of the South and the North or for tripartite talk. I would like to make it quite clear that the door to the talks is always kept wide open. We hope that a meaningful dialogue in any form comes into being between responsible authorities, primarily for the sake of the reduction of tension and the establishment of peace in this land.

National Strength

I am firmly convinced not only that the main current of international relations is on the side of peace but that our national strength is formidable enough to crush any military adventurism and to ultimately open a way to peaceful unification.

Therefore, we will keep marching forward with unflagging endurance, refurbishing our national strength to ensure self-reliance, independence and self-defense, based on an ever-converging consensus of national purpose and on complete preparedness for national defense.

Dear fellow countrymen.

While the people have rising expectations for a better life resulting from the development of the national economy, the impact of oil price increases is dealing a blow to their daily life. Our national economy must face this new challenge just as the nation approaches the stage of an advanced industrial and welfare society. Yet, this hardship is not one that hits us alone. It is one that hits many peoples of the world.

I am mindful of the added hardships, particularly for low-income people and for small and medium scale industries among others, and thus the government is giving priority to the welfare of these groups.

We have already overcome with wisdom the worldwide oil shock which swept the world several years ago and instead seized upon the crisis as a springboard for a further leap. Rekindling our memory of this past experience, everyone of us has to endeavor to overcome the current economic hardships by putting into daily practice the Saemaul Undong (New Community Movement) spirit of industriousness, self-help and cooperation.

In time of hardships like this, entrepreneurs and employees are advised, in sharing difficulties and rallying their resources, to deepen their mutual trust in the realization of interdependence so as to overcome the current impasse. Only then a family-like atmosphere of brotherhood can be created in management-employee relations, generating a firm potential for further growth of enterprises capable of overcoming difficulties of any magnitude.

If we can prevail over the current difficulties wisely, we will increase the rationalization of management and the international competitiveness of industry. Then, we believe that the strengthened economic fiber and weathered discipline will provide the developmental momentum for recovery of fundamental economic stability, enabling us in consequence to change misfortune into blessing.

Fellow countrymen,

It was not by mere chance that we have succeeded in building our national strength up to the current level amid the sea of difficulties both at home and abroad. We would not be able to see what we see today if we had been unable to cut out the malignancy of

waste, inefficiency and disoriented national purpose from our political life decades ago, if we had been unable to reshape our democratic system to make it effective in solving our own problems by ourselves mobilizing the resources of the people.

If we had been unable to arise from an idle life of empty political slogans, we would have never been able to achieve the national development we witness today. National unity, political stability and economic growth, thus, are inseparably interlinked. This is the priceless lesson we have learned from past experiences and it serves as a code of action keeping us ever mindful of the state of affairs within and around us.

All of us should be rightly reminded of and prepared to deal with the stark reality that the situation in which we find ourselves today calls for double and triple precautions with no room for any negligence in the matter of national security or in the matter of the domestic economy or overseas trade.

Determination and Strength

It is a great nation indeed that distinguishes itself by fulfilling its hidden potential especially in time of crisis. There is no room for the short-sightedness that shuttles between pessimism and optimism at every turn of fate. We have to uphold the sense of accountability and faith before history, an unshakable determination and a united strength. Everyone of us, as mature citizens of an independent nation, must face and tackle every problem on his or her account with pride and self-confidence that we are the masters of our own destiny.

Only then, we can surmount the difficulties of today and confidently open the door to a promising new era.

We all ardently share the national aspiration to build a welfare society by upgrading our economy, to nurture

the flower of culture and to hand down this heritage to future generations.

I call on all of us to march ever forward in gallant strides until we transform the liberation of the fatherland into a national regeneration.

IX

South Korea's Call To North Korea To Come To The Conference Table

ENGLISH VERSION of remarks made on September 12, 1979 by the spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the closure of the Sixth Non-aligned Summit Conference held recently in Havana:

It was reported that at the Sixth Non-aligned Summit meeting held recently in Havana, Cuba touched on the Korean question in its final statement.

There is no change in our position expressly stated in the South-North Joint Communique of July 4, 1972, that the question of the Korean Peninsula ought to be solved peacefully through direct talks between the responsible authorities of the direct parties involved, namely, South and North Korea. We always keep the door to the resumption of South-North dialogue wide open, looking forward to north Korea's positive response.

This reasonable position has been endorsed by the international community. For instance, the U.N. General Assembly has refrained from discussing the Korean question since 1976. The Non-aligned Coordinating Bureau Foreign Minister's Conference held in Colombo in June 1979, too, did not take up the Korean question.

It was an act lacking impartiality for the recent Havana Non-aligned Summit Conference to discuss the complex situation of the Korean Peninsula based only on North Korean demands and include an unreasonable and biased view in a conference document. This cannot but be taken to indicate that the conference failed to grasp correctly the kernel of the question.

It is an act of turning the issue upside down and confusing the result for the cause to discuss only the issue of withdrawing alien forces which are part of the war deterrent before making efforts to embody a guarantee of a durable peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Bilateral military cooperation which a country promotes with its ally for its own security as well as for the prevention of war is a question that falls under the sovereignty of the countries involved. This can by no means be a problem that can be interfered in by any third parties.

We hereby declare that even if the Korean question was discussed at an international meeting we did not attend, we shall not be bound by any decision made at such meeting which does not reflect our view.

As we take this occasion to emphasize again that the shortest route to easing tensions on the Korean Peninsula and realizing ultimate peaceful unification lies in either the unconditional resumption of dialogue between South and North Korea in line with the July 4 South-North Joint Communique for peaceful unification which was referred to in the final statement of the recent Havana Conference or acceptance of the 'three way' meeting which we proposed on last July 1, we urge North Korean authorities to make a reflection based on national conscience.

Furthermore, North Korea, though it is not a member of the non-aligned movement because of military treaties with the Soviet Union and mainland China con-

cluded in and after July 1961, avails itself of the non-aligned conference, jeopardizing the genuine solution of the Korean question and resulting in a substantial damage to the authority of the non-aligned movement.

